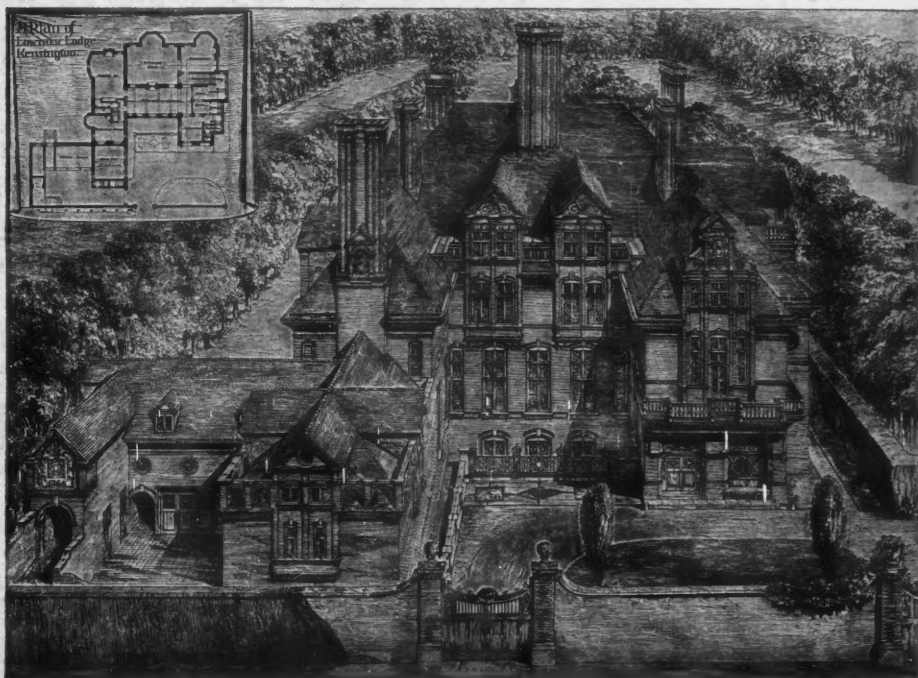


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A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration



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Vol. LXXXIX

March 1941

No. 531

Books on the Planning of Modern Buildings

TOWN HALLS By A. Calveley Cotton, A.R.I.B.A.

Under the collective title of "Town Halls" the author includes the Departments usually incorporated in a municipal centre—Municipal Buildings, Assembly Hall and Law Courts, and examines in detail the planning problems associated with each. In the chapters on departmental layout the views, both of Councillors and permanent officials, are summarized concerning the merits of different arrangements. Six recently built Town Hall schemes—Slough, Worthing, Hornsey, Beckenham, Southampton and Swansea—are fully illustrated by plans, sections and axonometric projections, and have been specially drawn to be easily read. About 40 other town hall plans are included, as well as details of various plan units. Price 6s. Postage 7d.

SMALLER RETAIL SHOPS By Bryan and Norman Westwood

This is the second book to be published in *The Planning of Modern Buildings Series*, which is considering the planning, structure and equipment of certain specialized types of buildings.

The text is sectionized under various headings such as: The Various Problems—Sites and Sales Values—Sites in Detail—Elements of the Plan—Windows—Blinds—Signs—Pavements—Lights, etc.; and is fully illustrated by photographs and plans, while a large number of detail drawings are included. In addition, grouped together at the end of the book, there are 35 pages of illustrations of specially selected shop-fronts, interiors, plans and detail drawings of shops at home and abroad, with descriptive matter. Size: 12½ ins. by 9 ins. Price 10s. 6d. Postage 7d. Abroad 1s.

THE DESIGN OF NURSERY AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

By H. Myles Wright, M.A., A.R.I.B.A., and R. Gardner-Medwin, B.Arch., A.R.I.B.A.

The new educational policy of which the framework was laid down by the Hadow Report is slowly being put into practice by education authorities throughout the country. With larger grants being made available, it is probable that the pace of re-organization will improve; but the greatest obstacle will still remain the changes in school buildings and their surroundings which the new policy requires. Of these changes the largest are: new Nursery Schools, separate Infant, Junior and Senior Schools; larger sites and looser groupings; and higher standards of equipment.

This book is concerned solely with such problems. It considers Nursery Schools and Classes, Junior and Senior Schools. Dimensions and layouts are suggested for each element in the school plan; the various alternative groupings of the plan units are discussed, and a large number of complete school schemes carried out in this country and abroad are illustrated. No such survey of contemporary school buildings exists at present in this country. The book contains 128 pages and about 250 photographs and drawings. Size 12½ ins. by 9 ins. Price 10s. 6d. Postage 7d. inland.

The principal contents of these books originally appeared in "The Architects' Journal."

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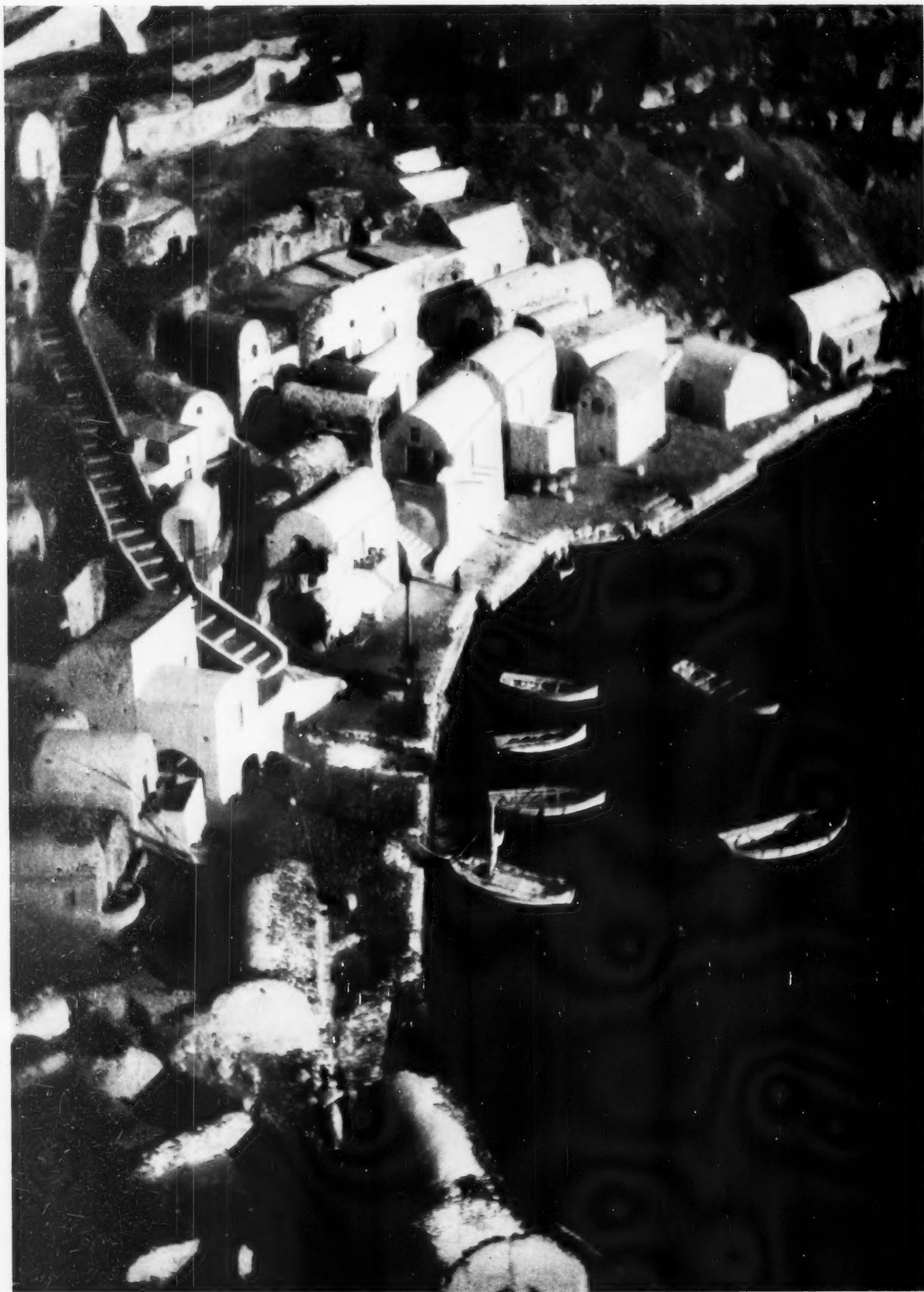
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An index is issued every six months, covering the months of January to June and July to December, and can be obtained, without charge, on application to the Publishers, 45 The Avenue, Cheam, Surrey.

THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, 45 The Avenue, Cheam, Surrey

Telephone: Vigilant 0087



The Greek islands of the Aegean Sea can lay as good a claim as any place to be the cradle of Mediterranean architecture, a recognized, much-discussed but never very accurately defined type; and these primitive dwellings on the island of Thera show it in its most elementary form. The standardized dwelling unit consists of a rectangular cell with a vaulted roof, on which another identical unit is often super-imposed. A similar type of cell dwelling is found elsewhere in the Mediterranean basin, in its most spectacular form in some remote

villages in Southern Tunisia (see note on page 56). It is often associated with troglodyte cliff-dwellings. This photograph, of the port of Apano-Meria, on the island of Thera, clearly shows the transition from cliff-face dwellings first to half-dug and then to free-standing houses. The cells in the background built as a row, so that each helps to take the thrust of the vault of the one next door, conform to the original arrangement. The free-standing cells have probably been rebuilt after destruction by earthquake or flood.

THE CRADLE OF ARCHITECTURE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Friendship with the Immortals

By Nicolette Gray

I HAVE just, as I write, heard of Tennyson's death. Ruskin is now the last of the Immortals of the nineteenth century." "And that sort only come once in a generation, and there are no more: they broke the mould fifty years ago." There is no question, that those "immortals" are on a larger scale, to our minds, than any of their successors. This instinctive appreciation was immediately recalled to me in reading the collection of letters written to Sir Sydney Cockerell, published recently.* We may think Hardy, Conrad, T. E. Lawrence, men of greater genius; but Morris, Ruskin, Carlyle, we still recognize to have been made in a larger mould. What is the cause of this? Is it partly perhaps that the accumulated hero-worship of a generation creates a larger image for the mind of posterity? Certainly the hero-worship of the Victorians was far more dedicated, personal and widespread than anything that occurs today. And it was given and received among them with a naturalness that has become impossible. The letters from the old Ruskin to the very young Cockerell who first wrote to him out of the blue, are extraordinarily simple, intimate and affectionate. Cockerell remonstrated with him about his quarrel with Octavia Hill and was answered thus, "Dearest Carlie, Every word you said was right and tender and true to the last syllable—and I never knew such a perfect and loving friend as you are. That I am sad or silent is my infirmity not your fault, and it is bodily infirmity causing incapacity of thought—not error in feeling. But it is very heavy on me, and neither laugh or waves nor light of sun relieves it. Nay it has of late taken the form of longing for forgetfulness—and hearing the hours after midnight strike, with sorrow that the darkness is passing away . . ." There was among the "fellowship" an intensity of feeling and a spontaneity of expression that seems almost foreign today—though paralleled by the equally foreign brilliance of Pre-Raphaelite colour. Ruskin writes: "I entirely had yielded when I took your tearful kisses and will do whatever Olive and you wish me to do." Or to Mrs. Cockerell, "Not answer! I never was more eager to answer—in utter thankfulness—in the deepest joy—that I have been permitted the least part in the forming of the thoughts or guiding the hearts of your children."

To those admitted to intimacy with heroes life must have been rich indeed. To have seen Beauvais at twenty-one with Ruskin, as Cockerell did, must have been as rich as any imaginable aesthetic experience. It also, of course, created a gulf between the fellowship

and the outside world. It is Philip Webb who uses the term "fellowship." "My dear friend—in the 'fellowship'—It is but a shoddy or stock-exchange kind of intelligence which can look without seriousness upon the loss of one more friendly soul at any time of life, and the more so at my time, when but a few more can be picked out of the uncompanionable mass one is hustled about in." Any cultivation of the idea of their own superiority or of being set apart was obviously quite foreign to the simplicity of Webb or Morris, or the approachability of Ruskin, but the Whistler pose existed in practice to a large extent among the Pre-Raphaelites. As *The Times* wrote in Ruskin's obituary, "Artists must not be unmindful that they owe the fuller recognition of their title to public admiration and public patronage in no small degree to the blaze of glory with which his meteoric pen has invested their whole vocation." Was it a sensibility to this growing apartness which encouraged the formation of the peculiar Pre-Raphaelite language? Unfortunately the two letters from "Topsy" are little more than business letters to his secretary, but the letters of Philip Webb have a very distinct style, not only in the simple slang, "grub" and "swipes," but in such expressions as "the man Lethaby," "mind you" as a sentence-opening, "Kidlings," and a practice of using composite words, "I am too home-keeping a fellow-being not to feel vacant-hearted at the separation."

There are examples, too, in the letters of Lady Burne-Jones and Lethaby: "asking-question pitch," "a-coming"; Cockerell answers "Signor Filippo" in the same vein, "always your interfering S. C. Cockerell"; among the variations in letter-signing particularly charming are "Till I think otherwise, I am yours truly, Philip Webb."

With the growth of solidarity in the fellowship came loss of accessibility, and so loss of touch with the ordinary world, and so a gulf between two generations, in many ways so homogeneous. It is interesting to find awareness of the gulf in Charles Ricketts, so close a follower of the Pre-Raphaelites. "Whilst washing my teeth—always a moment of meditation—I decided that the nation was returning to the average type: that Byron, who was persecuted, but who nevertheless forced Romance upon a generation; and Dickens with his compassion and sentimentality, and Ruskin with his art and morals, had modified for a while the British temper, since they were

popular, and account for the Englishman of the mid-Victorian period, who was more cultured than the man of today. With the Boer war, possibly the Oscar Wilde case, and probably with the advent of King Edward, whose hostility to all intellectual things and all superiorities is known and admitted, England has slipped back perhaps fifty years or so."

There is another possible explanation of the gulf, which is suggested in Sir Sydney Cockerell's correspondence. Indeed, in Sir Sydney himself (for he seems to belong to his first friends rather than to his own generation); he is a lover of medieval manuscripts and an authority on them, but he would never ordinarily be referred to as a medievalist. To us the middle ages are the object of study, of admiration, but not in the imaginative sense a Golden Age. But think of the passionate pleasure in Gothic architecture of the Pre-Raphaelites. Appreciation of the Gothic as a functional style, as an expression of national character, as a language to be revived, all this is in Pugin; but this acute pleasure in particular Gothic buildings seems new in Ruskin. It is renewed in the letters of Morris and Burne-Jones from their tour of Northern France of 1855. To Morris, Beauvais was one of the wonders of the world: "Seen by twilight its size gives one an impression almost of terror; one can scarcely believe in it. But when you see the detail it is so beautiful that the beauty impresses you more than the size." To Cockerell, "There is no place that means so much to me, and if my ghost flits anywhere it will be to the lovely old French town and its incredibly soaring cathedral." We can meet the practical effect of this particular love of architecture in that movement which even the strongest critics of medievalism and the Gothic revival applaud, "anti-scrape" or the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, founded by Morris in 1877. His statement on its formation is an admirable analysis of the curious state of architecture at that date. "Within the last fifty years a new interest, almost like another sense, has arisen in these ancient monuments of art, and they have become the subject of one of the most interesting of studies and of an enthusiasm, religious, historical, artistic, which is one of the undoubted gains of our time . . . for architecture, long decaying, died out, as a popular art at least, just as the knowledge of medieval art was born, so that the civilized world of the nineteenth century has no style of its own amidst its wide knowledge of the

* *"Friends of a Lifetime: Letters to Sydney Carlyle Cockerell."* Edited by Viola Meynell. Jonathan Cape. 18s.

styles of other centuries. From this lack and this gain arose in men's minds the strange idea of the restoration of ancient buildings."

I suppose it is largely due to Morris that any genuine Gothic survives in this country and to Philip Webb that a compromise has been found between allowing buildings to fall into ruin and restoring them with improvements. A nice indication of the change is shown in the two references to Viollet-le-Duc. Ruskin, when asked whether he was not glad at the publication of the *Dictionnaire de l'Architecture Française*, replied, "No, I was very jealous, I ought to have written it myself." Webb writes of Notre Dame and how it has suffered from "that arch quack-salver Viollet-le-Duc; and has been positively insulted, since his miserable reign, by that trumpety bit of inanity in the form of pinnacled niche to the Virgin Mary, destroying the distant view of the apse. I groaned and grunted over this, as if I were troubled by extra spasms from my unlucky middle region."

The Webb letters, written either during his retirement or relating to his search for a house to retire to, contain little of direct architectural interest, except one of which the last quotation is part, provoked by Cockerell's "daily bulletins of the health of our poor building-patients in la belle France" in the form of daily picture postcards. But there are some vivid and personal touches; I had never realized before how well Webb wrote; to Cockerell in Egypt: "The great sights, such as a mountain-range, or a sandy desert with strange forms like Pyramids and Sphinxes resting on it, put me in mind of getting out of bed in the morning and looking in little England at a big hill in the free air; and saying 'Ah, he is still there.' To you the wide horizontal plain and its objects must have given the same kind of feeling—a kind of gentle hand laid on the nervous system. I daresay that Coniston 'Old Man' must have had that effect on the way-worn John Ruskin in his last years!" There is a glimmer of the clatter of the Gatti-time (on Thursdays after anti-scrape) and an intimate picture of his simple life in Caxton's Cottage: "Mrs. Dickinson (housekeeper) bears all crosses excellently well, and cooks under difficulties to the very froth of perfection. She is evidently a born artist, and treats me as such. As yet the children have proved to be no nuisance; I mind their chatter no more than that of a magpie, or a clock's ticking. They go rollicking to school twice a day, and are not troublesome o' nights. Truth to tell, though the postman in his mailcart awakes me most mornings at 6.30, and if he has a parcel I must come down and open for it, I do not mind, as that settles the time to get up, to sweep

and water-draw, open shutters, under scant garments; after which the housekeeper having gotten hot water made, I go to the washing of self, coming down to a breakfast of milk-sop or porridge, both sane and hungry; and afterwards wood-cutting and generally clearing up the loose threads of the house-mending in summer time till 1 o'clock."

Webb's literal and obviously congenial practice of the simple life link up with the theory of Gill and the Ditchling community. But it is the social theories of Ruskin and Morris, not their love of the Gothic, which is thus connected with modern medievalism. The profound change in cultural background which has intervened is again illustrated in Ricketts: "Perhaps I exaggerate to myself my love for facts, virtues and forces which were admired in the Renaissance, and my loathing of tepid modern culture, tepid philanthropy and Christianity." We have changed our Golden Age. We can hardly exaggerate our inescapable dependence on the idea of the Renaissance. Pater, Symonds, Berenson, have made it golden, and no doubt as the Middle Ages were obscured to the mid-Victorians immersed in saga and romance and the contemporary myth, so the historical Renaissance is obscured to us. I wonder if it is this glorification of the Renaissance, of facts and virtues instead of systems and rationalizations, which has detached particular objects and actions from their meaning, made Ruskin unreadable and made the philosophy of Cobden-Sanderson compatible with sanity?

The letters published by Sir Sydney Cockerell give an authentic and extremely interesting account of the famous quarrel between Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker over the possession of the type belonging to the Doves Press. They are letters in answer to Cockerell's attempt at mediation. Here is an exposition of the final stage of that tendency in printing which is summed up in the term "the Book Beautiful." It is made quite clear that Cobden-Sanderson's idea is quite different from that of Morris. "Candidly I do not think that William Morris himself is a great printer: that his work is remarkable and in itself constitutes an epoch, is, again, another matter. William Morris came to printing with a mind set on decoration, and with a mind overscored with tapestry and woven effects, all which he reproduced where they were not wanted, on the pages of his books. And many of his effects, as I told him at the time, are 'typographical impertinences,' and utterly destructive of the page as an expression of the author's thought." Cobden-Sanderson is quite right, Morris's contribution to printing is in his type design, in the rich pattern created by the interplay of letters enhanced by decoration;

his letters are magnificent, a page of his printing is a joy, but the Kelmscott books are not books to read with pleasure. "Had E.W. been a second W.M., which he is not, my opinion of him would indeed have been other than it is, but it would not have been that he was a great printer, or, as I understand the word, a printer at all . . . a great printer would have felt that his work lay in the arrangement of type not in the type itself." It is therefore typical that the Doves Press made no experiments in type design, that the single type used in all its books was not new but the design of Jenson re-cut. Cobden-Sanderson accuses Emery Walker of desiring "to sell as well as to use" this type. Walker was indeed interested in ordinary book production for everyday use as well as private press printing. To Cobden-Sanderson printing was neither of these things, neither æsthetic nor utilitarian, but a relation between the printer and the work he printed. "The Press throughout has been to me the ever-growing representative of an idea, first of good workmanship in printing, in the production of the Book Beautiful, then in the State, and finally in the Vision, the workmanship of Life; and having printed the Bible, the type became, by association with it, in my mind, itself 'devoted,' 'not to be sold or redeemed,' dedicated to the sole use of the Press, as the Press to the Idea." He passed from the logical idea of the book as a self-sufficient entity to involving that idea in his own fanatical and visionary philosophy. It is unexpected to find that the centre of this unsympathetic way of thinking is the modern doctrine that to be contemporary is an end in itself. "To the uttermost rim, then, push the vision of today, see it, be it, live it, then die to give place to the minds yet to be born" (from his *Credo*). With regard to the dispute between the partners of the Doves Press over the possession of the type, Cobden-Sanderson's position is indeed made quite clear in the first letter of the correspondence: "It seems to me that I alone should have the type, whatever Agreements may have been entered into with respect to it."

A great proportion of the book reflects Cockerell's literary interests. Charlotte Mew comes out as a very memorable personality in her few letters. Hardy's detestation of *Wuthering Heights*, which he refused to read because of its "unrelieved ugliness," is interesting. The letters from Sir Sydney's own contemporaries—Yeats, Ricketts, Roger Fry—are, however, disappointing. There is no reflection here of the enchanted civilization of the 'nineties; there seems to be a gulf between it and the life of the wider years before, which he had precociously absorbed.

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AN AMERICAN TOWN HOUSE



**SANDERS AND BRECK,
ARCHITECTS**

ASSOCIATED WITH T. SMITH-MILLER

The photographs of this house, which are by Schnall of New York, are reproduced by courtesy of "The Architectural Forum."

This is a reconstruction of an old "brownstone front" house, of the kind common in many districts of New York City, to serve a rather specialized new purpose. The style of the old house can be seen in the photograph above from the surviving "brownstone front" next door. The purpose of the reconstructed one was to provide an office for three architects working in partnership and a



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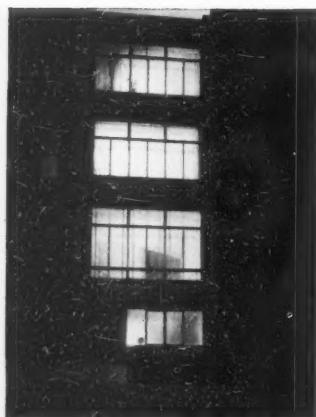
self-contained flat for each of them, two of them being married and one a bachelor.

A situation was chosen facing south, in a street wide enough to prevent any future building from cutting off the sunlight. The office has been planned to occupy the ground floor, with one flat on each of the three floors above. They are all reached by a staircase in the centre of the house, against one party wall. The kitchen and bathroom on each floor are grouped alongside the staircase, leaving the rest of the space free for a continuous suite of rooms with a vista of 50 ft. the whole length of the house. No piers interrupt the clear wall surface, and additional openness is given by the curved staircase wall where the living-room opens into the dining-room at each level. There is no fixed partition between the two.

The interiors have been planned for maximum penetration of light and for economical and flexible use of the rather narrow site. In each flat the entrance gives straight into the area used for dining, an arrangement which keeps the other rooms free from traffic. Living-rooms are at the front and bedrooms at the back. Bathrooms and

kitchen rely on artificial light and ventilation, or roof lighting in the case of the top floor.

Bedroom windows are of casement type, top-hung so that when open they form a protective awning. All heating units are recessed and doors and door-frames are flush. The simple finishes allow the living-room wall-surfaces to act as a background for paintings of various periods.



3

The living-rooms on the street front, 1 and 4, have steel windows the whole width of the building. On the inside they are flush with the ceiling. The leaves of the windows fold back, as in 1, to give a clear opening of 14 ft. The two centre panels are also hinged to open separately. Between the windows are corrugated aluminium panels, which act as sheathing to the cinder-concrete block walls. 2, a detail of the entrance, showing the screen of reeded glass which lights the front office. The two centre panels open hopper-fashion. 3, the street front at night.



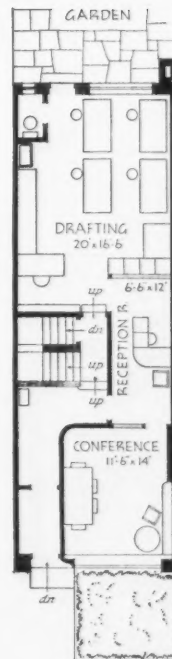
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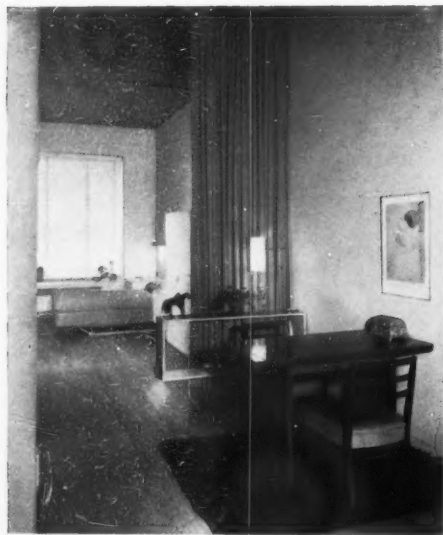


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The office, which is shared by the three architects living above, is reached through the same entrance hall that leads to the stairs up to the flats. It consists of a small reception office, a conference room at the front, and a drawing office at the back, the latter giving on to a small paved garden. The conference room has a built-in bookcase occupying a recess in one wall. The drawing office has built-in files, plan-chest and sample cabinet, and a sink in one corner. 5, looking from the conference room towards the reception desk. The door has a small panel over it and a large panel beside it of obscured glass, which admits light from the wide front window into the reception office. A similar glazed screen divides the reception office from the drawing office. The furniture is of birch ply.



First Floor: T. Smith - Miller



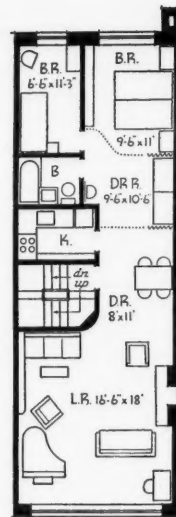
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Each architect designed the furnishing of his own flat. The first floor flat, like the other two, has no permanent partition between the dining space in the centre and the rooms opening off it. 6, looking from the dining

space through the dressing-room to the principal bedroom beyond, with the curtains that take the place of partitions drawn back. The folding top of the dining table has a linoleum surface. 7, the principal bedroom, with Venetian

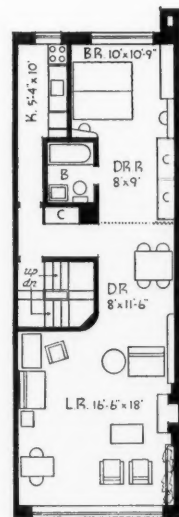


blinds shading the rear window. Walls and all woodwork are painted off-white. The curtains, which pull round to partition the bedroom from the dressing-room, are black and white and the bed-cover is coral. The chests either side of the bed have coloured maps on their upper surface, protected by sheets of glass. Lighting is concealed in a trough over the head of the bed.

Second Floor: Walter Sanders



8



In the second floor flat, instead of curtains, a folding partition divides living from sleeping quarters. The kitchen in this case is long in shape instead of square, and has a small window on the back elevation. One large bedroom takes the place of the two smaller ones on the first floor. 8, a corner of the living-room, showing the open fireplace which occurs in the side wall of the living-room of each flat. Below the window can be seen the standard type of radiator grille. At right-angles to the window is a trellis of cane, up which vines grow from a trough on the floor. The wall

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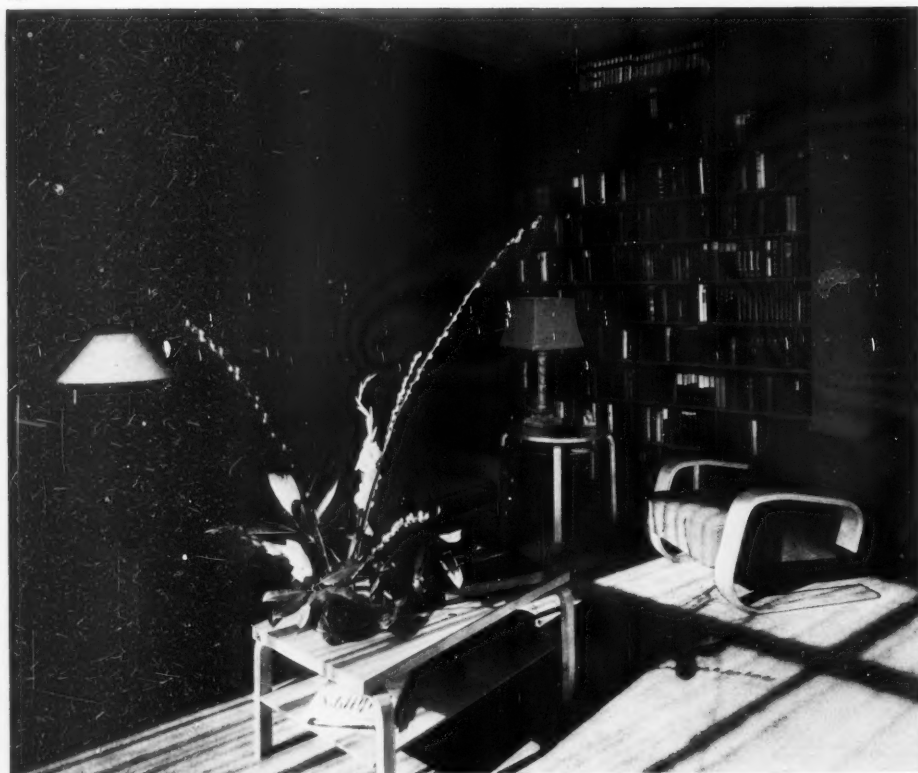
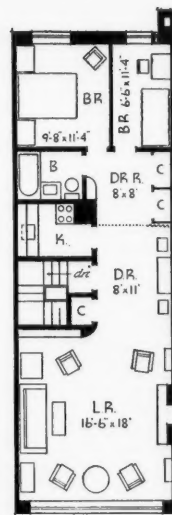
behind the trellis is coloured apple-green. The curtains are royal blue, and the chair upholstery green and blue. The coffee table in the foreground has satin-finished metal legs and a top of natural birch. 9, a general view of the living-room looking from the entrance. The floor is covered with Chinese matting. 10, looking from the dressing-room across the dining space into the living-room beyond. The folding partition, seen on the left, is grey-green in colour. Furniture and draperies are blue, green, and grey. 11, looking in the reverse direction, from the living-room, through

the dining-room and dressing-room, into the bedroom. The curved wall on the left is painted blue-grey and the side wall of the bedroom bright yellow; other walls are blue-grey and dove-grey. The bedroom has a royal blue rug and grey bed-cover. The wardrobes and the top of the dining table are highly polished black, their mirror-like surface being intended to reflect the light through the suite of rooms from the windows at either end. The dining chairs are upholstered in a grey-green material with yellow stripes and the sofa in the foreground in a bright green. All the ceilings are a warm off-white.

Third Floor: John Breck



12



13



14

The third floor flat, like the first floor, has two bedrooms occupying the width of the house at the back. The bedrooms have solid partitions with flush doors, but curtains divide the dressing-room from the dining and entrance space. As this is the top floor, the bathroom and kitchen are lit from above. 12, a general view of the living-room looking towards the windows. The floor is close-carpeted

with a grey "pebble-weave" material. The walls are Swedish blue and the ceiling a warm off-white. The sofa and chairs have salmon-coloured upholstery. 13, the inner corner of the living-room, showing the bookcase built into the staircase wall. 14, the same view of the living-room as 12, taken at night, and showing the full-height curtain that covers the large south window. The material is French blue with natural stripes. In all the living-rooms the window-cills (seen in 8, 9, 10 and 12) are wax finished and covered with white linoleum, edged with satin-finished white-metal strips. At the top the head of the window is flush with the surface of the ceilings.

Norman Shaw probably influenced architectural styles more profoundly than any one man since Sir Christopher Wren. Yet, until the publication of Sir Reginald Blomfield's recent book,* there was no detailed study of his work. It has for long been a notable gap in the documentation of the nineteenth century. Sir Reginald's book is chiefly one of reminiscence and factual information about the great man's career. The article that follows sets out to define the real nature of Norman Shaw's contribution to the development of architecture in this country.

1, New Scotland Yard, built in 1888, the most famous of Shaw's buildings. It is here depicted, in a drawing by Gerald Horsley, one of his assistants, as it looked before the addition of the annexe of 1900. It represents Shaw's most spectacular use of that early Dutch Renaissance style that he made so peculiarly his own, but to which he has here added a door and gable in the baroque style he used afterwards. The illustration is from Sir Reginald Blomfield's book, by courtesy of the publishers (Messrs. B. T. Batsford), as are the majority of the illustrations on the pages following. 2, a house by Norman Shaw at 11, Melbury Road, Kensington, built in 1877 for Luke Fildes, R.A., in a style popularized by him and much imitated. This illustration is from that influential folio "Die Englische Baukunst der Gegenwart," by von Hermann Muthesius, published in Berlin in 1900. From the same source are the views of Bedford Park and the house in Netherhall Gardens on page 46. The lithograph on page 44, of Cheyne House and Swan House, Chelsea, is by courtesy of the librarian of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The illustrations of Kew Palace and Sparrowe's House, Ipswich, included to show the source of two of Shaw's favourite motifs, are from Nathaniel Lloyd's "History of the English House."



Richard Norman Shaw, 1831-1912

By Nikolaus Pevsner



2

* "Richard Norman Shaw," by Sir Reginald Blomfield. B. T. Batsford. Price 12s. 6d.

THERE is no subject in the whole history of art that has been so neglected by serious critics as the architecture of the nineteenth century. Take the generation working in England during the mid-Victorian and late-Victorian decades. You can look up all details about Stevens's life and work in Stannus's big book of 1891, about Madox Brown's in Hueffer's of 1896, about Rossetti's in Marillier's of 1899, about Millais in the two volumes of the Memorials of 1899, about Burne Jones's in the two volumes of 1906, about Watts's in the three volumes of 1910, about Morris's in quite a number of biographies, long and short, good and bad. But where are the monographs on, say, Butterfield or Brooks or Burges or Bodley or Sedding or Bentley?

Even on Norman Shaw, the most interesting British and perhaps European architect of his generation, there was no book until Sir Reginald Blomfield's study, handsomely produced by Batsford's, has at last appeared.

Yet, though Sir Reginald is, if not a pupil, one of the closest followers of Shaw, he puts forward—and this shows how far we still are from any

accepted theory on the architectural evolution of the century—a conception of Shaw's significance so widely different from the one to which my own research had led me, that I hope it will not be considered superfluous if I try in the following pages, greatly helped by the material which Sir Reginald's book has made available, to outline my own views on the development, character and historical position of Shaw's work.

Richard Norman Shaw was born at Edinburgh in 1831. His father was an Irish protestant "with a Huguenot strain." His mother was Scotch. About 1846 he entered the London office of William Burn, a successful domestic architect. In 1853 he won the Royal Academy Silver Medal, and in 1854 the Gold Medal and Travelling Scholarship. The results of his travels to Italy, France, and also such picturesque places as Prague and Lübeck, were published in 1858 under the title *Architectural Sketches from the Continent*. In the same year Shaw got the job of chief draughtsman to Street. He succeeded Philip Webb, one year before Webb designed the Red House for William Morris, who, in his turn, when he had made up his mind that architecture would be the right training for him, had also worked under Street. That was in 1856,



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It is generally supposed—and is implied in Sir Reginald Blomfield's book—that Norman Shaw was responsible for introducing the revived "Queen Anne" style that had such a vogue from the 'nineties of last century onwards. But there is evidence, which is discussed in this article, that Eden Nesfield (for some years Shaw's partner) used it before him. 4 shows Bryanston, Dorset, Shaw's most celebrated house built in this style, which dates from 1890; but 3, Kimmel Park, Abergele, by Nesfield, dates from as far back as 1866, about ten years earlier than any efforts by Shaw in a similar character.

SHAW AND NESFIELD

before Street had moved from Oxford to London. Shaw's earliest work—e.g., a desk of 1861, illustrated in *The Builder*—is still wholly of the Gothic Revival and does not betray the future development of his creative powers.

The years in which they were drawn out were the sixties, and especially the period of his partnership with Eden Nesfield, which lasted from 1862-68.

One of the most interesting problems for the biographer of Shaw is connected with these years. There is still a great deal unknown about the working of the partnership. Nor does Sir Reginald contribute much to clarify the position. The puzzling fact is that during the very years in which Shaw and Nesfield collaborated in one way or another, Nesfield designed on the one hand a

number of cottages and lodges of a picturesque half-timbered type,* and on the other hand the large country mansion of Kimmel Park, Abergele, 3, which is a complete Queen Anne, or rather William and Mary, reproduction. The half-timbered cottages were not a new departure. They can be traced back to early nineteenth-century Tudorism,† though Nesfield seems to have rather specialised in them and treated them with an unusual ease. All the more surprising is Kimmel Park. Here is something completely new, an astonishingly early example—the designs date from 1866—of a style supposed to have been revived by Shaw about ten years later.

Now Shaw, furthermore, made his name immediately after the dissolution of the partnership with lavishly half-timbered country houses. Are we to assume, then, that some of the lodges, and Kimmel Park too, were conceived by Shaw and not by Nesfield, or must it be admitted that Shaw's future style was essentially dependent on Nesfield's? It is not easy to answer this question. Nesfield's "books and papers were scattered" after his death; so I am informed by Mr. A. Nesfield. But Nesfield, though three years younger than Shaw, seems to have been the leading spirit in the partnership, which after all was called Nesfield and Shaw and not Shaw and Nesfield. But while this may have had other, perhaps financial, reasons, the fact remains that in the paper on Nesfield's work contributed by J. M. Brydon to the first volume of *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW* the lodges as well as Kimmel Park are given to Nesfield while Shaw was still very much alive and no doubt well aware of the paper. Muthesius's indispensable three volumes on *Das Englische Haus* confirm these attributions.

We may take it, then, that when Shaw left Nesfield in 1868 he went full of ideas instigated by Nesfield. So he started, immediately after he had set up his own office, on country houses for prosperous Victorians, which, even if dependent on



5

The typical Norman Shaw interior maintained much the same character during all but the early part of his career, whether it belonged to a "Queen Anne" or a Flemish baroque style of house. 5 is the main corridor at Bryanston, illustrated above. The interior style of many famous transatlantic liners obviously derives largely from the heavy baroque that Shaw made fashionable.

* The Village, Hampton-in-Arden, 1860; Lodges, Broadlands, Romsey (ill. *Arch. Rev.*, vol. 1, 1897); Lodge, Regent's Park (ill., *ibid.*); Plas Dinam, Montgomery, 1872 (ill. H. Muthesius, *Das Englische Haus*, vol. 1).

† E.g. F. Goodwin; *Rural Architecture*, 1835; S. H. Brooks: *Designs for Cottage and Villa Architecture*, 1839, etc.

Nesfield's cottages, are far superior to them not only in scale but also in variety and picturesqueness, a happy synthesis of the wealthy looking and the homely looking, bound to appeal to his clients, whether æsthetically susceptible or not. Leys Wood, Groombridge, Sussex, 6, is the best known of them. It was built in 1868. Shaw must have enjoyed himself thoroughly in composing this group out of bays and dormers and mullioned and transomed windows, and tall chimney stacks and divers gables. Of Philip Webb's restraint there is nothing here. Though æsthetic puritans may reject these houses as sham and theatrical, Shaw had found a medium for his restless, over-abundant (Celtic ?) imagination.

Nor did he see why he should keep to this one medium, though it had made him famous. His very love of the picturesque led him to embark almost at once upon a new stylistic adventure, and this time, it seems, quite on his own, without any predecessor. He discovered the possibilities of the Dutch-looking English brick style of the early seventeenth century, of which Kew Palace is the chief representative. Lowther Lodge, Kensington, of 1873, 8, now the headquarters of the Royal Geographical Society, is the best example of this second style of Shaw's, just as lively in the grouping, just as happy in the ultimate achievement of equilibrium (before the addition of the east wing) as the earlier Tudor houses, but now with the aid of pilasters, segment-headed windows and decorated pediments instead of plates, posts and braces, and mullioned windows and gables. Here Shaw has reached a new stage in English architectural historicism. The revival of the picturesque trends of Nordic Renaissance is, it seems, wholly due to him. It took place at exactly the same moment as Germany, after the war of 1870, plunged into a national Neo-Renaissance, and a little later than the moment when France had rediscovered François I.

While Lowther Lodge, though new within nineteenth-century historicism, is still representative of historicism as such, the New Zealand Chambers in Leadenhall Street, 10, designed in 1871 and built in 1872, are fundamentally new—new on a most important point of principle. The central motif, the charming row of curved bay windows, is, it must be admitted, a piece of straightforward period copying. The bays of Sparrowe's House, Ipswich, 13, in their very provincialism, so wholly untouched yet by the contemporary official Palladianism, must have pleased Shaw more than any other English motif of the past. He repeated them over and over again.* But what is more important for the general effect of the New Zealand Chambers than this period motif, prominent as it may be, is the fact that it is

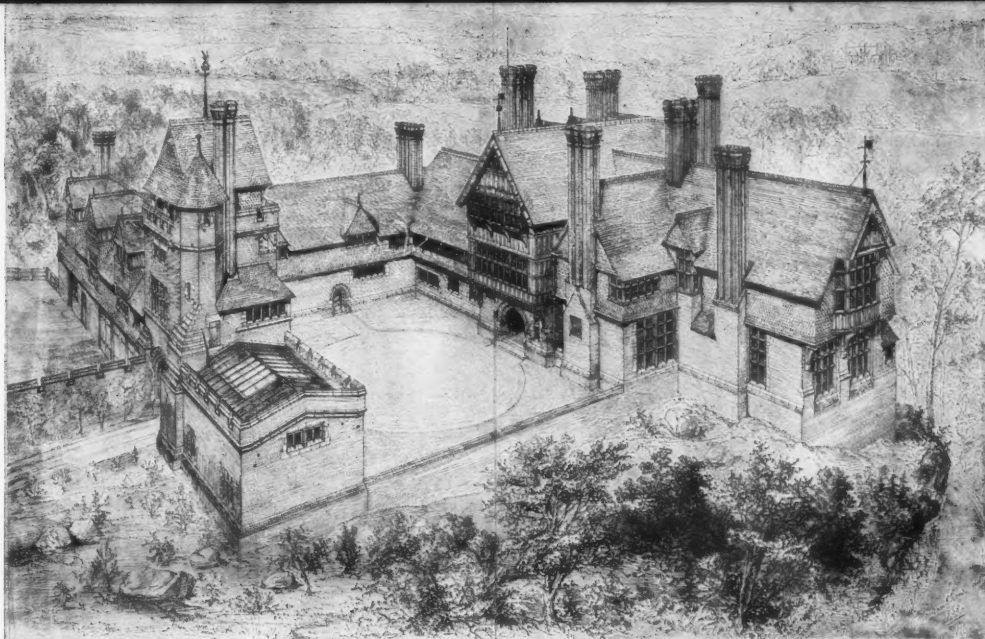
* For example, in his own house, 6 Ellerdale Road, Hampstead; in Swan House, Chelsea; in "Three Gables," Fitzjohn's Avenue, Hampstead; and in 8 Chelsea Embankment.

PERIOD STYLES REVIVED

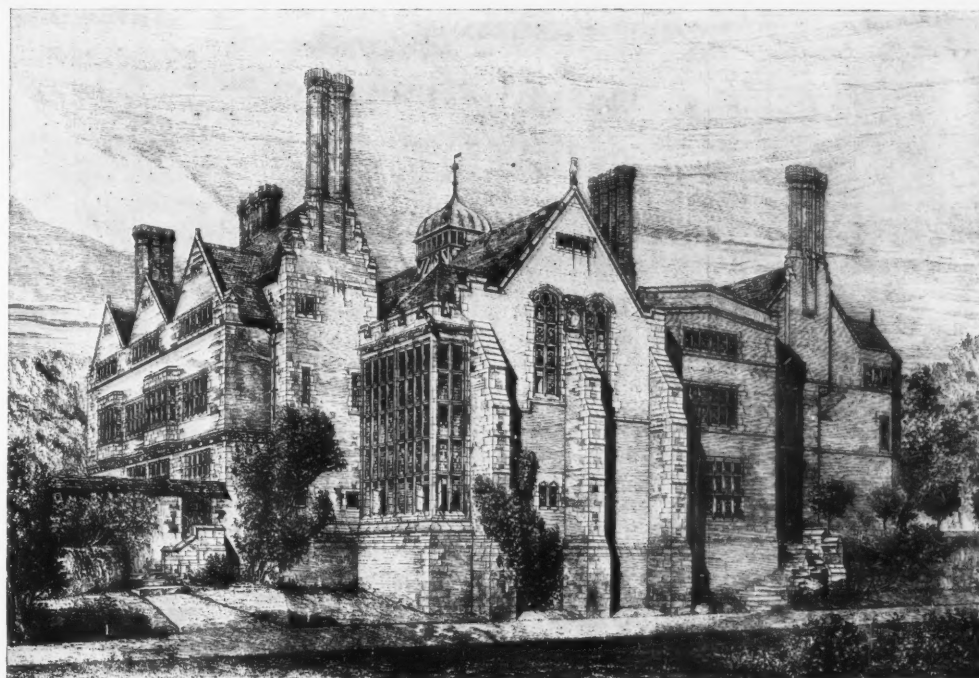
During the earlier part of Shaw's career, when he had a successful practice building elaborate country houses with almost no limit to the expense, he either worked in an romantic Tudor style, as in *Leys Wood, Sussex, 6*, built in 1868, and *Adcote, Shropshire, 7*, built in 1877, or else in his favourite Dutch Renaissance style whose revival was entirely due to him. 8, *Lowther Lodge, Kensington* (now the Royal Geographical Society), built in 1873, a good example of this style. It was still, though a speciality of Shaw's, a genuine period style, used with scholarly correctness. 9, *Kew Palace*, by which it was largely inspired.



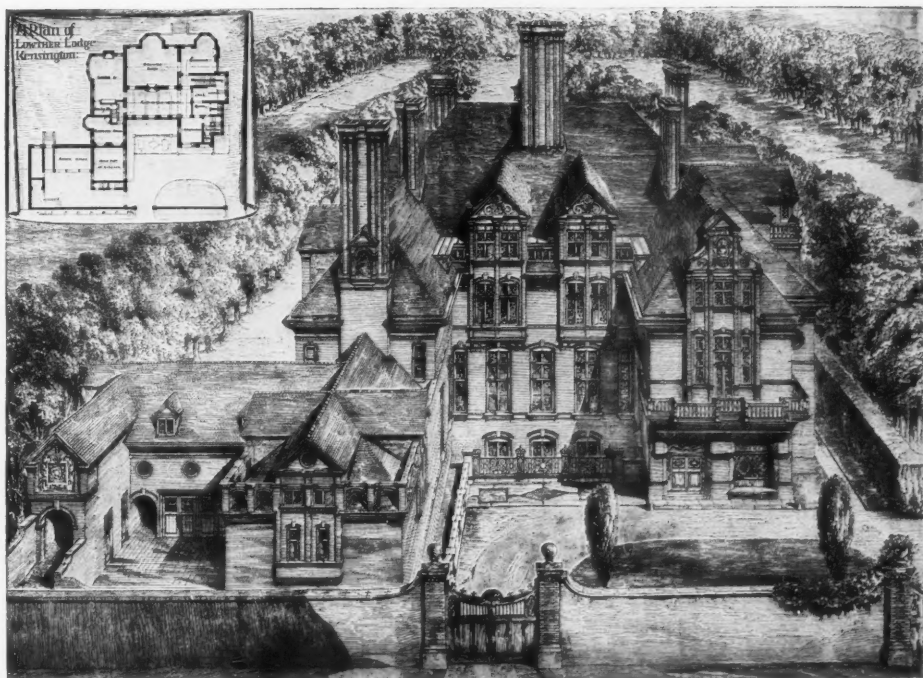
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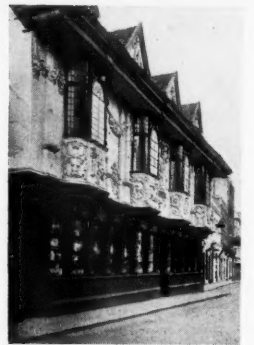
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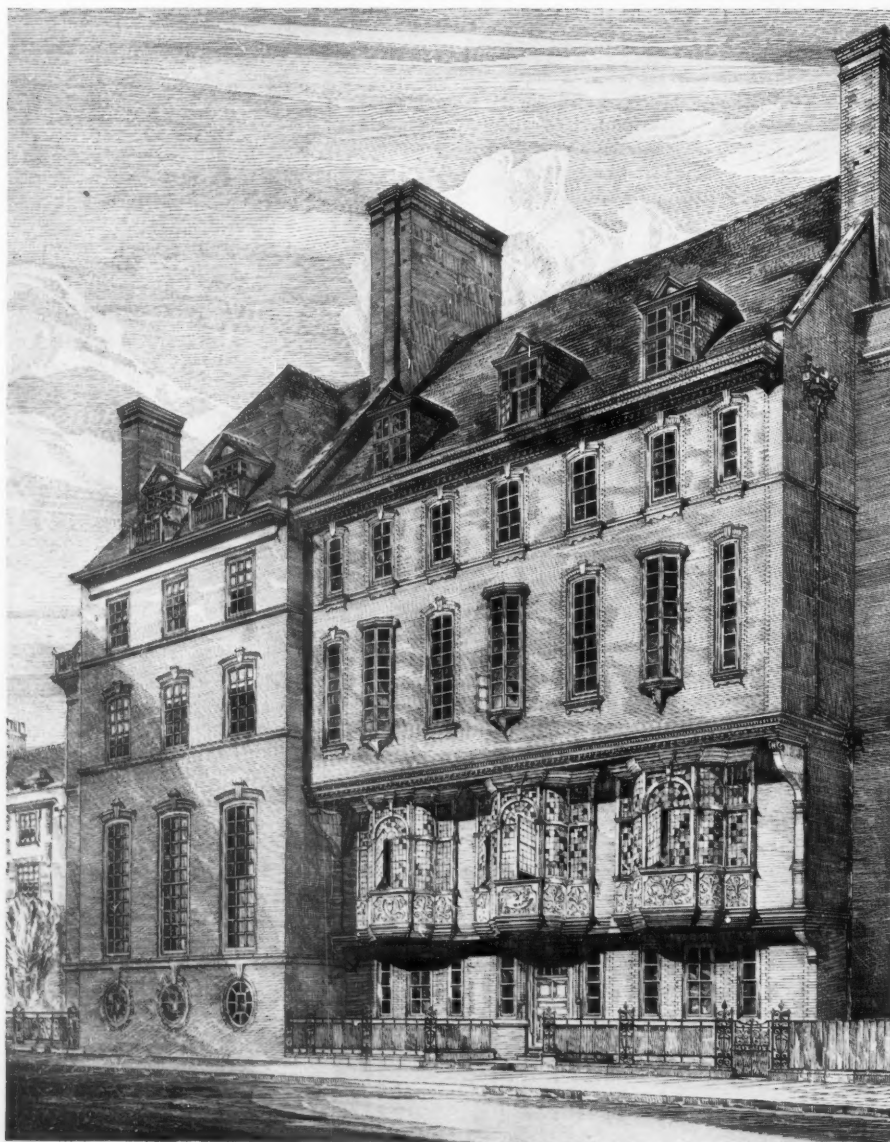
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10, New Zealand Chambers, Leadenhall Street, built in 1872, Shaw's first building in a free style (as distinct from a directly revived one), period motifs being combined with others entirely original, such as the large ground floor windows. 12, Swan House and Cheyne House, Chelsea Embankment (1876), belonging to his same phase. 13, Sparrowe's House, Ipswich, a well-known seventeenth-century building exhibiting a favourite motif of Shaw's, the window used in both the above. 11, "Merrist Wood," near Guildford, a country house

that shows a striking originality compared with the period pieces already illustrated; related to Philip Webb's work, it also anticipates several characteristics of the English vernacular revival.



13



12

EMERGENCE OF ORIGINALITY

combined with other features entirely independent of the past. Thus Shaw introduces on the ground floor two large windows with small panes in white frames, disconnected at first sight from the upper floor, yet a fit basis for the bays above, if the façade is regarded as a pictorial more than a structural whole, and moreover, eminently fit to light offices on the ground floor of a narrow city street. The dormer windows are equally devoid of period detail.

Only four years separate the New Zealand Chambers from Cheyne House and Swan House, Chelsea Embankment, 12; but again Shaw has moved forward, in his search through the history of English architecture for suitable examples to follow. The style of Kew had been quieter than Tudor; now—discarding once more a certain amount of ornamental enrichment—Shaw turns to Queen Anne, as his former partner had done ten years before. Cheyne House has a very interesting asymmetrical ground plan, but its façades are nearly as simple as those of Kinnel Park, plain brick walls and well spaced, extremely tall, narrow windows with segmental heads, taken straight from Church Row, Hampstead, a few yards from where Shaw was just then building his house. Swan House has a normal ground plan, but more movement in its façade, with the Ipswich bays on the first floor and a delightful non-period motif on the second: gracefully elongated polygonal bay windows alternating with slender Queen Anne windows.

Now this was Shaw's stylistic position when the last quarter of the century set in. And to correct an impression perhaps given by the foregoing analysis of the various stages through which he

had passed, it is necessary to add that, while they began one after another, they by no means replaced each other. Shaw kept a comparatively correct academical Tudor going even after his "Queen Anne" phase had begun. Flete, Devon, of sixteenth-century character, dates from 1878; Dawpool, Cheshire, of early seventeenth-century character, from 1882. Picturesque half-timbered houses were also still in demand. Wispers, Midhurst, of the very year of Swan House, is as romantic as Leys Wood, while Merrist Wood, Guildford, 11, of 1877, suggests a certain influence of the more delicate treatment of Shaw's "Queen Anne" upon his Tudor. Or has Philip Webb's restrained interpretation of the same style and his subtle combination of seventeenth and eighteenth century detail with high-pitched roofs and gables, notably at Joldwyns (1873), impressed Shaw? Be that as it may, Merrist Wood is characteristically Shaw in its spirited rhythm. The large white window filling the wall on the left is in convincing contrast to the animated arrangement of the small windows and tiny polygonal bays in the long wall on the right. The style of Kew also went on alongside Tudor and Queen Anne, above all in tall London houses such as 196 Queen's Gate, 15 Chelsea Embankment, 6a, 68 and 72 Cadogan Square, and Albert Hall Mansions (next to Lowther Lodge; supposed to be the first block of flats of that kind in London).

By then Shaw was approaching his sixtieth year. Of his works between 1887 and 1890 the most noteworthy are 170 Queen's Gate (1888) and Bryanston (1890), 4, the simplest examples of his "Queen Anne," scarcely ornamented at all, and Scotland Yard (1887-90), 1, where Dutch early seventeenth century is enriched by motifs round the door and in the gables which are grander in scale and more spectacular in character than Shaw had used hitherto. They herald the last significant change in the architect's development, his turn towards a baroque Palladianism. The first complete, though still cautious, example of this is Chesters (1891), Sir Reginald Blomfield's favourite amongst all Shaw's works. In full bloom we find it in the Piccadilly Hotel (1905), 15, and in the project for rebuilding the Quadrant. The façades of the Piccadilly Hotel come as a surprise to anyone fond of Swan House or the New Zealand Chambers. One feels somewhat uncomfortable in front of this showpiece of Shaw's undiminished power. Not

only because the responsibility rests with him for breaking Nash's scale of proportions and his skyline, nor only because here the most original of British Victorian architects suddenly recedes into one line with the Belchers and Mountfords, but also because after the delicacy of Shaw's earlier masterpieces the Piccadilly Hotel seems so massive, so showy, not to say vulgar.

Historically speaking, too, these last works of Shaw do not seem to me to be of anything like the same importance as the earlier ones. It is here above all that I cannot help differing from Sir Reginald. He sums up Shaw's development as follows: "Street . . . held with Pugin, not only that Gothic was the only Christian art, but that it was the only possible architecture. . . . It took Shaw many years to recover from this unfortunate early start; all his life was spent in working his way from it, to the monumental Classic, the goal of his ambition, which he never quite reached." That this should be Sir Reginald's conception is quite understandable, considering the fact that it is this late style of Shaw's which he himself has followed. Since he so passionately objects to our contemporary style, and regards what might be called British Empire Neo-Palladianism as the leading style of our century, he is bound to overlook what appears to me to be Shaw's paramount achievement, his pioneer work for the Modern Movement.

To me Shaw's position in the history of English nineteenth-century architecture is twofold. The nineteenth century in England and everywhere else is the century of historicism. For the first, the pre-Victorian, generation there was no problem in this. You built Classic or Gothic as your client wished you to or as the job seemed to require. Other styles were not yet accepted as imitable except for a few Hindoo and Egyptian freaks. The next generation added the Italian Renaissance,* a more dramatic Neo-Baroque,† and Domestic Tudor.‡ In a work on furniture design of 1847§ models are imitated "in the Grecian, Italian, Renaissance, Louis Quatorze, Gothic, Tudor and Elizabethan styles." The third gener-

* Barry, born 1795; Travellers' Club, 1829; Reform Club; Bridgewater House. Vulliamy, born 1790; Dorchester House.

† Hardwick, born 1792; Goldsmiths' Hall, 1829; Basevi, born 1794; Fitzwilliam Museum, 1837.

‡ Salvin, born 1799; Scotney Castle, 1837.

§ H. Whitaker: *The Practical Cabinet-Maker's and Upholsterer's Treasury*.

ation, the architects born between 1810 and 1830, can be called the generation of the archeological purists and consequently of the Battle of the Styles—Gilbert Scott's generation. There are Pugin and Pearson and, on the other hand, Greek Thompson amongst its older members, and the convinced Gothicists, Street, Brooks, Burges, Bodley and Waterhouse, amongst the younger.

While Shaw was developing his own style between 1868 and 1875, amongst the new and spectacular buildings he saw go up were Scott's St. Pancras Station (begun in 1863) and Government Offices in Whitehall (1868-73), Street's Law Courts (1874-82) and Waterhouse's Manchester Town Hall (1868-77) and National History Museum (1873-80). He cannot have liked any of them. For up to his fifty-fifth year he kept away from official large-scale building entirely, devoting his imagination wholly to the intimate.

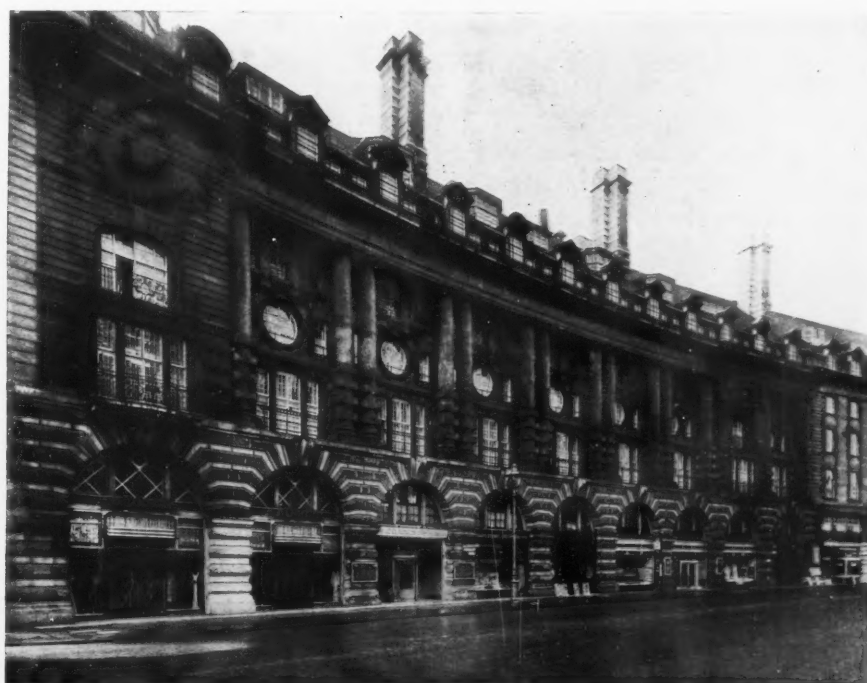
Within his orbit he added to the then accepted styles two new ones never, or scarcely ever, used before him: the English seventeenth-century style of Kew and Ipswich, and his William and Mary or "Queen Anne." In this he proved an innovator although without any attempt as yet to break away from the principle of historicism. Later still he turned towards the baroque and the Palladian; but again not transcending the limitations of historicism. The influence on younger architects of Shaw's contributions towards a widening of period reproduction was great. His Dutch Renaissance is the chief source of Ernest George's style of the Cadogan district, as it may be called, the most popular West End style of the late 'eighties. Shaw's last phase inspired Sir Reginald Blomfield and is co-responsible for today's official British style. And—more important than this—the immediate outcome of his "Queen Anne" is Ernest Newton's Neo-Georgian, already fully developed in his book on small houses of 1891 (not 1879, as Sir Reginald writes).

Now Newton's style is unquestionably one of the two chief components of the Modern Movement in England, though perhaps the less original and adventurous of the two. The other—and now at last we are coming to what, in the period of about 1890 to 1900, was the most inspired and most progressive style in Europe—is represented by the work of Mackmurdo, Voysey, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Baillie Scott and some others. They



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14, a typical example of the Dutch-style town house that Shaw and his imitators built in great numbers: 180, Queen's Gate, dating from 1885, during the middle phase of his career. Towards the end of his career his interest turned towards an ornate neo-Palladian style, much more in line with the work of the conventional academicians of the time: 15, the Piccadilly Hotel, 1905.



15

RETURN TO CONVENTION



16

THE ENGLISH DOMESTIC REVIVAL

The illustrations on these pages indicate the aspect of Norman Shaw's work that is of greatest importance as part of the history of architectural evolution in this country, the aspect that posterity is likely to value most. 16, Bedford Park, the pioneer garden suburb, built in 1876-80, showing the pub and store. It set a precedent for much later domestic work of the simple vernacular kind for which England acquired world-wide celebrity. 17, Shaw's house in Netherhall Gardens, built for the painter Edwin Long, R.A., in 1888 (and since destroyed). It has much in common with the earliest work of C. F. A. Voysey, and a solidity and sincerity typical of the English domestic revival it heralded, but quite at variance with the showiness of Shaw's later monumental buildings. Both these were illustrated in Muthesius's book on English houses, published in 1900, which had such a profound influence on the Continent.

too, owe a great deal to Shaw. But on these most modern and significant aspects of Shaw's work Sir Reginald has little or nothing to say.

Take Bedford Park, Turnham Green (1876-80), as a starting point; the earliest of all garden suburbs, with its winding streets, its old trees preserved, and its detached or semi-detached houses of plain brick with sparingly added decorative features of Renaissance or Queen Anne, it appears strikingly modern in some of the vistas it offers. Go there again, look down the Bath Road, for example, from the corner with the pub and the store on one side and the church of St. Michael's on the other, and you will be surprised how short the step really was from here to the Hampstead Garden Suburb. Examine an individual building at Bedford Park, such as the store, 16. What do you find? A façade almost entirely of glass—large sheets with panes on the ground floor, bays on the upper floor—an ensemble of a distinct twentieth-century flavour, although put up in 1880. It was in Bedford Park, too, that Mr. Voysey built his first important house.* One of the chief æsthetic effects of this house is the contrast between wide stretches of bare walls and asymmetrically placed bands of low horizontal windows. Where might Voysey have seen such a rhythm and such windows? As for the windows, they were quite similarly used by Shaw as early as Cragside (1870), and a rhythm which to my mind is eminently comparable appears just one year before Mr. Voysey's house—that is in 1887—in one of Shaw's most interesting and stimulating buildings, the house at 42 Netherall Gardens, Hampstead, 17, now no longer existent. Again, in Voysey's next town houses, the pair at 14 and 16 Hans Road,* tiny bay windows occur which are undoubtedly derived to some extent from Swan House and Shaw's other Chelsea Embankment houses. Even Shaw's Tudor seems to have left its mark on Voysey's mature style, closer as it is to English tradition than his earliest phase. The large mullioned and transomed hall window without any mouldings, a forerunner of a characteristic motif of the Modern Movement, appears in Shaw's Cragside, Adcote, 7, and Merrist Wood, 11, some time before Mr. Voysey used it in Wancote, Hog's Back, and in a modified form in the more famous Broadleys.

Now these are by no means the only motifs which

Shaw passed on to the younger pioneers of the Modern Movement. But it is not the motifs that matter, it is the spirit, the courage with which Shaw ventured to mix up period and non-period aspects, guided only by his exceptional æsthetic sensitivity. There are only two others in his generation carried by the same courage to the same or a similar aim, and they are the two greatest: William Morris and Philip Webb. Morris was the most universal, the most forcible, the most influential of the three, but Shaw was more spontaneous than the others, because he was in no way encumbered by theory. His sense of the picturesque enabled him to combine discordant forms easily and convincingly. There is less logic in his ground plans than in Webb's and less constructional responsibility in his façades. But ground plans such as those of 42 Netherall Gardens, or 6 Ellerdale Road,* are designed with just as much pictorial gist as the façades here illustrated, or such decorative showpieces as the Dawpool fireplace which Sir Reginald Blomfield illustrates. No wonder that Shaw became a favourite architect with the Royal Academicians of his time. He built houses for Marcus Stone, G. Boughton, Luke Fildes, Edwin Long and Frank Holl, and nothing entitles us to assume that he did not like their Victorian manner of painting. The Pre-Raphaelites, on the other hand, were not to his taste. He cannot have had much patience with their puritan conception of truth and their repudiation of surface appeal by dazzling brushwork. Nor can he have been in sympathy with their ideal of all arts serving the community, as William Morris preached it and tried to embody it in the work of his firm. To Shaw—a strange instance of narrow-mindedness—Morris was but a tradesman posing as a Socialist. Here it becomes alarmingly obvious that Shaw was a brilliant artist but not a thinker. His contribution to the book, *Architecture, a Profession or an Art*, published in 1892, against the R.I.B.A.'s plans for a bill of compulsory registration of all architects, is feeble. He writes, as do the other contributors—chiefly his pupils—against the architect as a professional man, head of an office with clerks and ghosts. What he maintains against this nineteenth-century conception is not the constructor nor the craftsman but

the free artist, the enthusiastic designer of beautiful buildings. But some of his pupils, above all Lethaby, plead most strongly for craft and for constructional conscientiousness. For in Shaw's school there were not only those of his own type, but also convinced Morrisites. As a school it was with all its variety of personalities no doubt the strongest force in English architecture between 1890 and 1910. There was Lethaby, to whom Sir Reginald rightly devotes the whole of the last chapter of his book, theorist, prominent member of the Arts and Crafts Movement, a scholarly historian of mediæval architecture and first head of the most progressive of European art schools, the London Central School. Then there was Prior, Slade Professor in Cambridge and author of the best books in English on Gothic art, and T. G. Jackson, the belated mediævalist who was engaged on so many Oxford Colleges, and Sir Reginald Blomfield, and Horsley, and Macartney, first editor of *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*, and Ernest Newton, initiator of twentieth-century Neo-Georgian and second editor of the *REVIEW*.

Surely, a man who could inspire so many and so varied pupils cannot have been less interesting as a personality than we have found him in his architectural work, and it is disappointing that Sir Reginald does not lead us as close to his human qualities as Lethaby does to Webb's.



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* Ill. N. Pevsner: *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*.

* Ill. H. Muthesius: *Die englische Baukunst der Gegenwart*, Berlin, 1900.

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CURRENT ARCHITECTURE

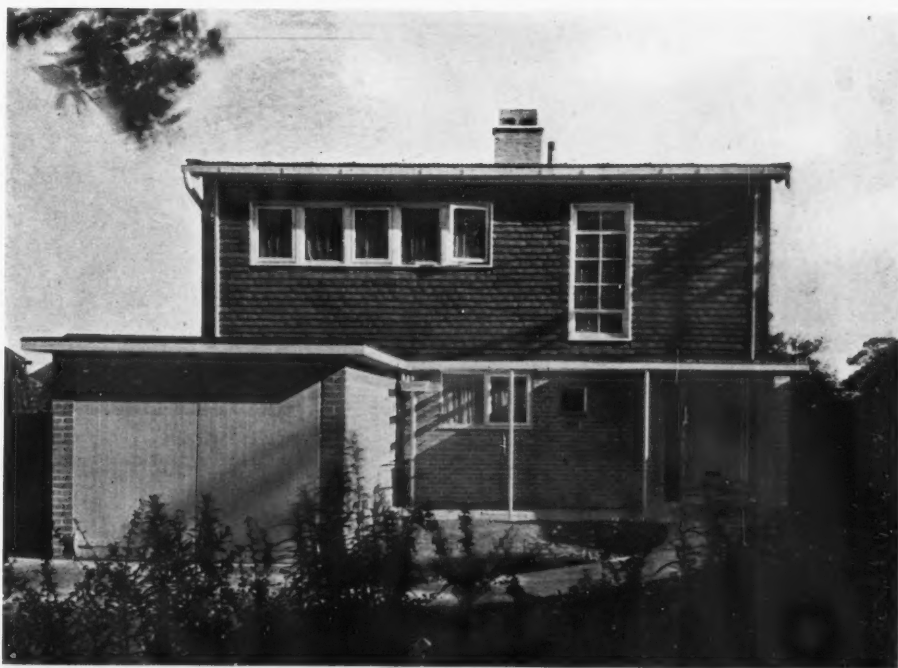
H O U S E S

FREDERICK MACMANUS

SITE At Harrow Weald, Middlesex. The site, a narrow tapering one with a 43 ft. frontage, is on high ground with good views to the south, and is approached from a tree-lined road on the north.

PLANNING The accommodation required by the client was a large combined living-dining-room, small well-equipped kitchen with a maid's room adjoining, lavatory and garage on the ground floor, and three bedrooms, bathroom and storeroom on the first floor. The local authority required the house to be set back 39 ft. from the road and that a minimum space of 5 ft. should be provided at each side of the building. This left a width of only 29 ft. for the house. In order to provide the required accommodation economically the spine partition wall has been set at an angle on plan. This, while reducing the width of the living-room at the dining end, where the space is less required, enables more space to be allotted to the maid's room and kitchen. Upstairs, the splayed partition likewise enables more space to be given to the front bedroom without causing any apparent loss of space in the other two rooms, the beds in these being placed towards the narrower end of the rooms. The effect in the living-room, which is 27 ft. 6 ins. long, is one of spaciousness created partly by the perspective of the splayed wall and partly by the large amount of window space.

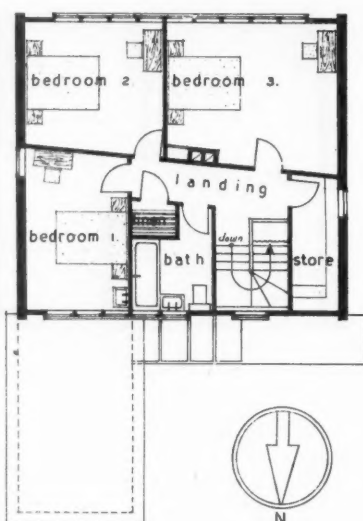
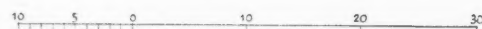
CONSTRUCTION AND FINISHES For economical reasons brick construction, with the upper part of the house timber-framed, was adopted. The south wall is wholly timber-framed on account of the large amount of window-space. The side walls were required by the local authority to be brickwork to the whole height. The spine partition to both floors, and all the partitions on the ground floor, are of brickwork and those on the upper floor in timber. The external brick walls are 9 ins. thick, battened out on the interior face to leave an air space, in the Scottish manner, to receive the finishings. The timber framing is of 4 in. by 2 in. timbers, the main posts to the external walls, at 2 ft. 6 in. centres, consisting of two of these timbers spiked together. The mono-pitch roof was employed for simplicity



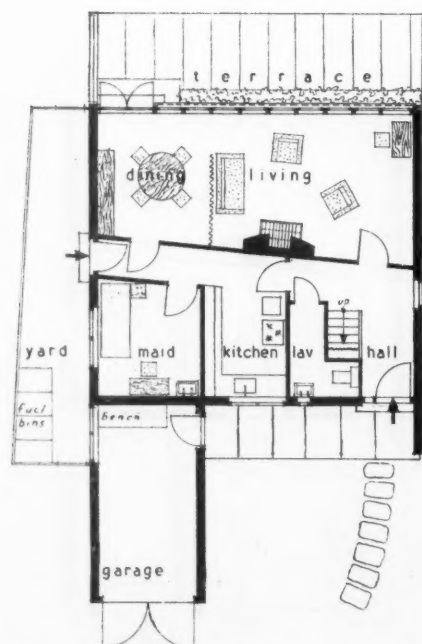
1, the garden side, which faces south. 2, the north side, facing the road. 3, the house under construction, showing the timber frame and diagonal boarded walls before the addition of the tile hanging. The tiles are red, ground-floor brickwork dun-coloured, woodwork ivory, and garage and entrance doors yellow.



4



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



5

4, the living-room, showing the bow-fronted fireplace faced with eggshell-glazed cream-coloured tiles. The fire opening has a stainless steel surround. Woodwork and walls are ivory colour. The hearth is of black tiles. 5, the dining end of the living-room. The walls and ceilings are lined with insulating board and distempered ivory colour, except for the end wall, which is Wedgwood blue. The curtain tracks are flush with the ceiling, the tracks of the French window-curtain returning along the end wall. 6, the kitchen, with stainless metal sink and built-in refrigerator. Walls, ceilings and fittings are ivory colour and bow handles terra-cotta. The cupboard tops are covered with cream linoleum.

and to enable all the rainwater to be collected at the front of the house owing to the limited fall available for the drains. The roof and the framed external walls are covered with 1 in. rough boarding, laid diagonally to act as bracing.

The facing bricks are dun-coloured concrete bricks and the framed walls are covered with red sandfaced roofing tiles. In order to keep the pitch of the roof as low as possible corrugated asbestos-cement sheeting was used for the covering, under which the roof is felted. Although the south elevation is wholly timber-framed, the base up to the ground floor window-cill level is faced with a 4½ in. thickness of brickwork in front of the framing, as tile hanging was not considered desirable so near the ground level. The floors, apart from those to the hall, kitchen and maid's room, which are of linoleum laid direct on an underlay on the concrete, are of wood joist construction covered with narrow-width deal boarding for

close carpeting. All internal walls and ceilings, apart from those to the kitchen, which are plastered, are finished with ½-in. thick insulating fibre boards, providing good thermal insulation and, in addition, allowing the house to be occupied immediately upon completion owing to the dry construction.

EQUIPMENT All doors are of the flush type. The casement windows are of light section timber construction; sashes are only provided to the opening sections of the windows; elsewhere, the glazing is direct to the frames. The windows in framed walls are set in wood surrounds projecting forward from the tile hanging. Central heating to all rooms is provided on the low-pressure hot-water system, the boiler being thermostatically controlled. All radiators are fixed clear of the floors, and extend the whole width of window openings. Hot water is provided on the indirect system by means of a calorifier. The calorifier is fitted with an electric thermostatic immersion heater to provide hot water in summer when the heating system is not in operation. All hot and cold water services are placed and insulated against frost. The rising main is brought up on an internal wall and the cold water storage tank is placed in the roof space against the chimney stack and well insulated. The kitchen equipment includes a sink with double drainers of stainless steel and a large gas-operated refrigerator. The bathroom towel rail incorporates a radiator.

COST The house was begun just before the outbreak of war and the cubic cost, at pre-war rate, was 1s. 3½d. per foot. The total cost of the house, including heating installation, equipment, fencing, etc., was under £1,400.



6

HOUSES

FREDERICK MACMANUS

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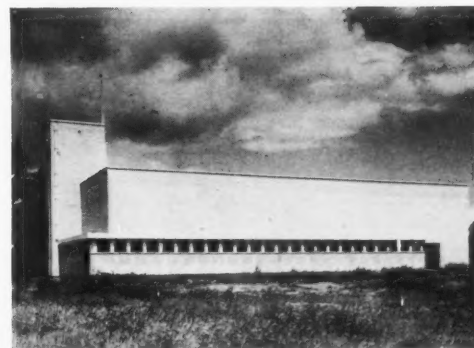


C H U R C H E S

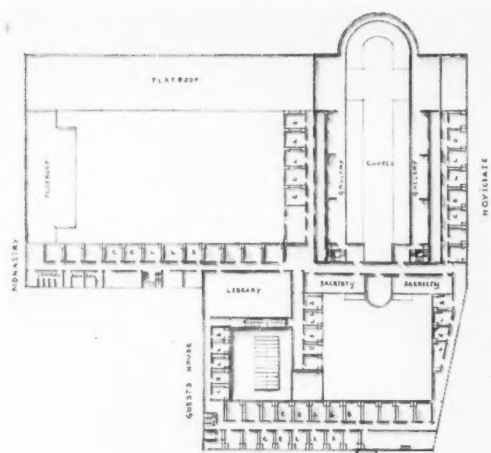
SITE At Cockfosters, Middlesex. It is the first completed portion of a new Benedictine Priory. It is to serve only temporarily as a church, as the complete scheme (see plans overleaf) includes a larger permanent church to the south of it. When this has been built the building illustrated here will be used as a parish hall. The scheme, which owes its inception to the Father Prior, Constantine Bosjchaerts, includes cells and classrooms grouped round a large courtyard to the east of the church, and communal rooms such as library, refectory, etc., grouped round a smaller courtyard to the north. The part already built also includes a large entrance hall or foyer.

CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS The church has a reinforced concrete frame with brick in-filling, the whole being faced with white bricks. The cross is recessed in the brickwork of the tower, and this and the projecting lettering on the flank of the building are coloured bright red. All windows are metal casements, with frames painted red.

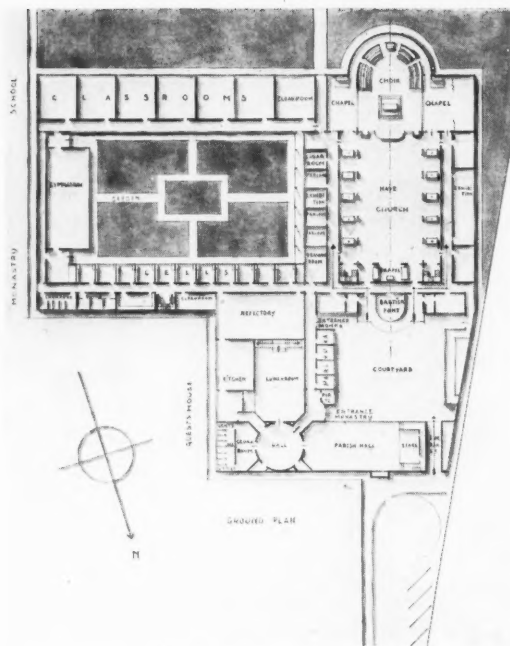
FINISHES There are flush doors throughout, the internal doors being painted black, picked out with bright red. Walls and ceilings internally are of rough plaster, coloured cream. Bright red is also the colour of the crucifix and lettering behind the altar, the internal window trim and such details as door furniture. The seating in the church is of pitch pine. Floors are covered with linoleum. The



1, the church from the north, showing the relief lettering on the flank and the cross deeply recessed in the wall of the tower. Both these are coloured bright red, the wall surface being white brick. The row of windows lights a range of cells, the church itself being lighted from above. 2, the interior, looking towards the altar, showing the roof lighting. 3, the south-west view. 4, a detail of the north side.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

altar cloth and vestments were designed and made by the nuns. The cross on the tower can be floodlit red at night.

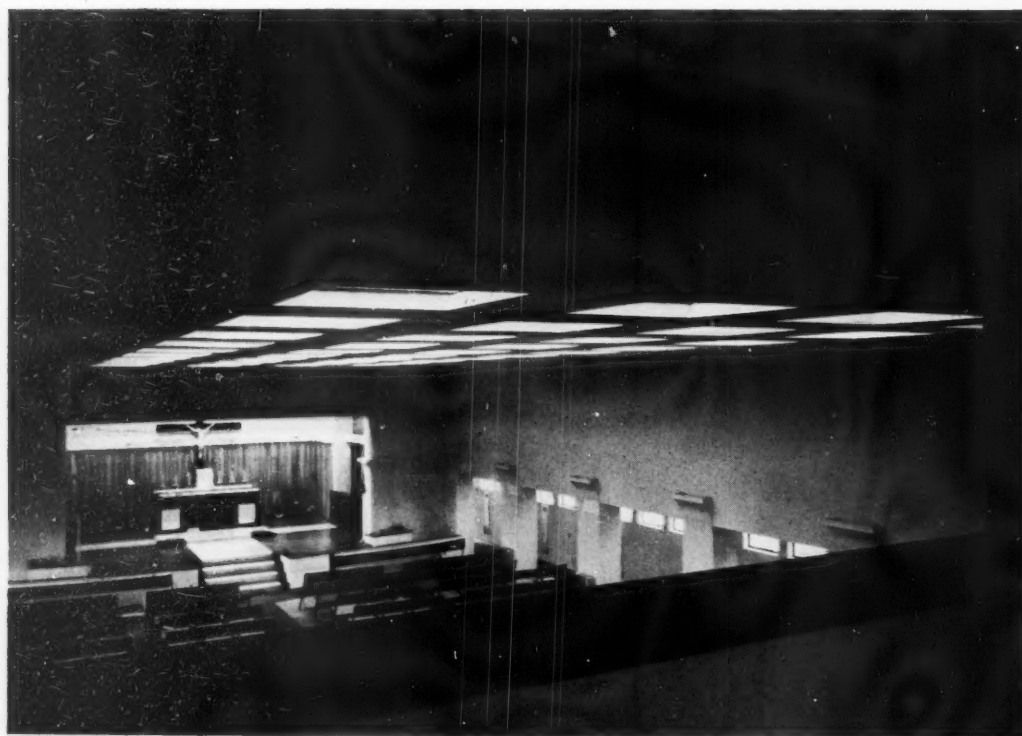
EQUIPMENT There is a central heating system. The church has concealed lighting through panels in the flat ceiling and fittings on the pilasters.

5, the interior, looking from the altar towards the entrance foyer. 6, looking down into the church from the gallery. The plans above, from sketches by Father Boschaerts, show one of several designs for the complete scheme. In execution certain modifications to this have already been made.



5

CHURCHES



6

These monthly articles are frankly about the æsthetic aspect of architectural design. They are written in the belief that we can now take the practical basis of modern architecture for granted. They claim, that is to say, that we have got beyond the stage when we were so thankful for the sheer reasonableness and efficiency that the modern movement in architecture brought with it, that these were sufficient recommendation in themselves; but that there is now room, in criticism as in actual design, for study of the æsthetic basis that the art of architecture postulates.

CRITICISM *By James MacQuedy*

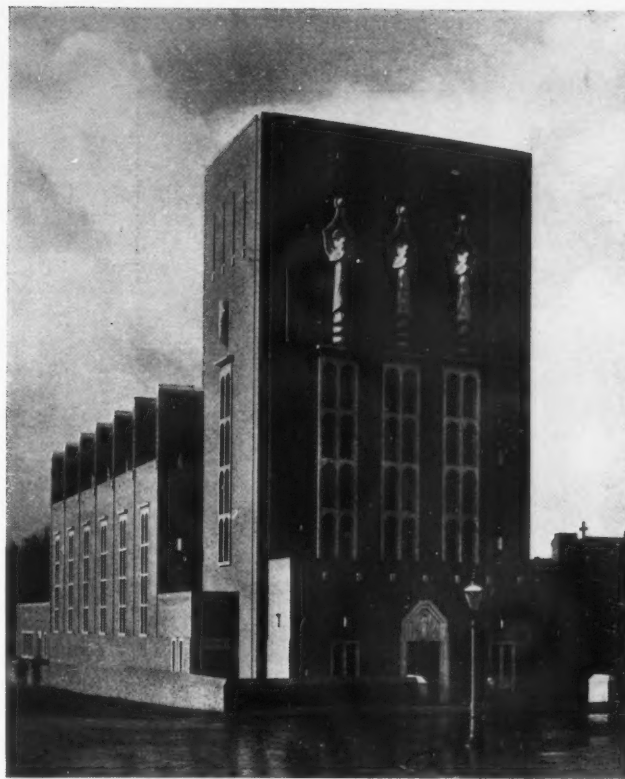
GENERALLY speaking, conservative opposition to modern architectural ideas is not directed against the ideas themselves but against the results. In this world of architecture differs from other worlds; that of politics, for example, where conservative circles that will damn a measure automatically if they are told it is a piece of socialism, have been known to accept it without protest when it is not so labelled. In architecture, on the other hand, a superficial strangeness of appearance is what offends the die-hard. The label of "modernity" is seldom frowned upon, but it is so variously interpreted that contemporary architecture gains nothing in unanimity.

This distinction is of more than academic interest, because it gives some clue to the forces at work in the centre of the contemporary æsthetic confusion. The people who oppose "modern" ideas are not those that disapprove of modernity, but those that see a better modernity in their own conceptions, the inevitability of change being taken for granted. It is true that there is often a sort of intellectual vested interest in each successive phase of architecture's development, which makes people resent the failure of architecture to crystallize itself at the moment of their most extensive understanding; and that this tendency rouses conflict not only between generation and generation but also at a much quicker tempo. For example, the recent converts to modernism of one sort or another (the great numbers of whom can be gauged by a walk down any arterial road and a glance at almost any large block of flats), find themselves firmly and loyally converted to just that arid geometrical style that is most patently out of date. But this tendency for the rank and file to discover that which the pioneers have already discarded is always an accompaniment of change. The truth remains that in architecture it is the nature not the fact of change that is in dispute.

The result is that architectural controversy tends to be unduly concentrated on superficial appearances. The opposition to modernism is not so much concerned with the complete revolution in planning technique and in the use of materials in relation to needs that the modern way of thinking really consists in, as in wanting buildings to look as though they were changing much more slowly than they are. Although this desire leads to obvious and undesirable anomalies—such as the clothing of a steel-framed Regent Street in the semblance of masonry construction—it is based on a reasonable sentiment: the appreciation of the fact that architectural values are partly associational ones. This is the strongest card in the hand of the so-called traditionalist, who is not unreasonable in asking that, for the sake of the Man in the Street to whom architecture is so much an affair of symbols, continuity should be pre-

served where possible. Often, however, I must repeat, this need is used by the exponent of historical as well as modern stylisticism to cloak a vested interest in a well-tried rule-of-thumb solution of design difficulties; and in any case it cannot excuse those efforts that have been so much in evidence lately to conform partially to the superficial changes of the times without acknowledging the parent revolution to which they are due; building up an elaborate structure that acquiesces in every change but the essential one. In this case gradualism, instead of being an attempt to soften the blow of revolution, becomes a Machiavellian technique of reaction.

At the time we are living in the blow cannot be softened very much; for all the reasons that have been discussed so endlessly, architecture has got to acknowledge a revolution, and is, in fact, in the course of doing so. But we have lost much by the necessary suppression of all associational feeling. In the case of modern types of building—great hospitals, for example, and extensive planned housing schemes—we can perhaps wait for the new associations to grow with familiarity and with the less doctrinaire use of exclusively modern elements that greater confidence will bring. But in some types of building, those in which the traditional link with past usage is strong, architects have generally preferred to try to reconcile changing appearances with traditional associations. Some months ago I discussed the place of the associational element in architecture in its general aspect; but it might be instructive, as a way of seeing the process of



SYMBOLISM is one of the six headings under which the author of this article classifies contemporary attempts to solve the difficult problem of church design—difficult because a church, like any other building, ought to belong clearly to its own age, and yet in church architecture the associational values cannot be ignored altogether. The symbolists eschew period imitation but reconstruct the effect of churches of the past by a similarity of outline and by an equivalent series of formal motifs. The latter are suggestive rather than imitative. *St. Monica's, Bootle, by F. X. Velarde.*

adaptation at work, to take one category of architecture in which the associational values are particularly important and see how architects, being conscious of the inevitability of change, have still set about keeping their foot in a traditional world.

The obvious type of building to choose is a church, because it is itself as much a symbol as a building and gives the architect a very good case for the retention of traditional forms, seeing that one function of the building is to play an essential part in the ceremonial its plan is based on, the existence of

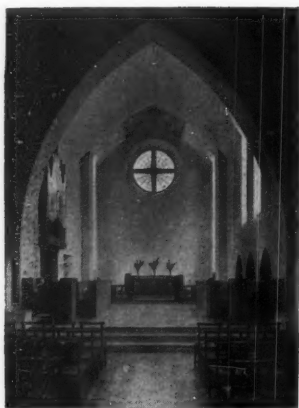
traditional ceremony in one case and not in the other being the essential difference between religion and belief.

For the reasons already stated, contemporary church architecture is simultaneously backward in its stylistic development and advanced in the sense that the direct vision is less frequently obscured by doctrinaire design. Whether the vision in question is a truly prophetic one or one coloured by other attitudes of mind as irrelevant as the "modernist" doctrine itself, is what we have to determine.

It seems to me that one can divide contemporary church architecture into about six categories; architects faced with the task of designing a church, that is to say, have taken one of six attitudes. The first we will have to call the antiquarian, though, strictly speaking, the ideal of pure antiquarianism is a thing of the past. It had its hey-day during the second phase of the Gothic Revival, when the Camden Society took it upon itself to stereotype ecclesiastical architecture in a pure "middle-pointed" style, and whether you were a man of vision like Pugin or Carpenter or a mere machine for producing orthodox church designs, the criterion was the degree to which you had been faithful in every detail to this period, one during which you believed English architecture to have reached its sublimest heights. He who had the temerity to introduce into his buildings detail even fifty years too late was a backslider—morally as well as artistically. It does not matter that the results were singularly different from what the architecture of the early fourteenth century must really have looked like; it is the intention that matters. This ideal of antiquarian purity persisted surprisingly strongly throughout the century, despite the exotic eclecticism that was prevalent during its latter part. Its last great exponent, I suppose, was J. L. Pearson,



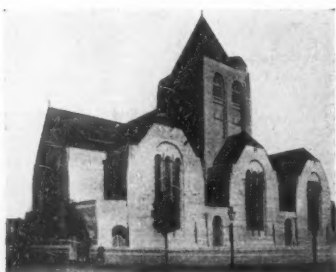
ANTIQUARIANISM in its purist form did not survive the nineteenth century; but one notable living architect whose work must be included under this heading is J. N. Comper, though his churches have many virtues of originality and imagination that the more orthodox Gothic Revivalists did not possess. But he shares with them the aim of recapturing the spirit of a period by reviving its actual motifs. *His church of St. Mary, Wellborough.*



PICTORIAL CHARM. Another category of church architecture, in which simple forms, reminiscent of (but not entirely derived from) picturesque vernacular architecture, are used with conscious charm, avoiding both the vigour and the vulgarity of, for example, much good Victorian work. Left, at Ilave; right, at Weston Green, Surrey: both by Edward Maufe.

architect of Truro Cathedral, though still later we find a school of church architects who may be said to have inherited the ecclesiastical mantle because they tried to recapture the spirit of a single age and worked, in a minor key but with much sensitive scholarship, in a circumscribed English tradition. Such men were Temple Moore and Walter Tapper, and the only such in practice today is J. N. Comper. I class Comper with these with some hesitation, however, not only because he has the range of scholarship and the confidence to mix his periods occasionally (*vide* his church at Portsmouth, where a Gothic arcade is supported on classical capitals) but because his great merits as an architect are due to qualities of imagination and three-dimensional perception that have nothing to do with the style he happens to work in. Nevertheless, he is the last of the scholar-architects, and one whose mind dwells in a past in which he feels more at home than in the present. That is where antiquarianism fails to produce live architecture; Comper's architecture is only alive because he is an artist too. His criteria are architectural ones even if his language is the language of scholarship.

My second category is that of period eclecticism; its history begins with

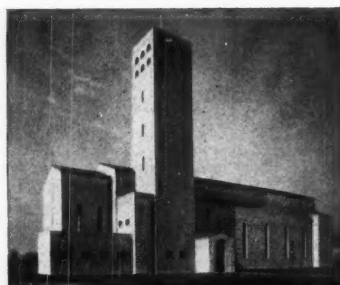


ECCLECTICISM. or the use of various past styles for the sake of the effects that can be built up from them, uses either a mixture of motifs from all periods—as in the late nineteenth century—or a more carefully consistent synthetic style such as the adapted Gothic employed by Sir Giles Scott in this church at Liverpool.

Ruskin, includes such great men as Butterfield, Street and Sedding,* as well as the rank and file of hack church architects who for many years treated the history of architecture as a kind of

* Richard Norman Shaw is generally accounted the arch-prophet of this school, but it is worth noting that in his ecclesiastical work he was much more restrained than elsewhere, and followed much more closely a simple English style that belongs to my category one.

bran pie from which effective elements for building could be extracted *ad lib.*, and ends with Robert Lorimer and Sir Giles Scott. These may seem strange bed-fellows, for some are quite



This church combines the rather non-committal stylization of the kind illustrated above with the dramatized geometry of that classified as symbolist. At Harrow, by A. W. Kenyon.

bizarre exponents of the mixing of styles and some, like Sir Giles Scott in Liverpool Cathedral, maintain consistency within their own synthetic idiom, but what they have in common is this: that they all look upon the trappings of style as simply a means of producing an effect; and for the sake of that effect anything is legitimate. They are therefore distinct from the purist antiquarians who aimed to recapture the spirit of an age.

These two categories belong to the past. They are survivals from the nineteenth century, from the days when period style, synthetic or revived, was architecture and the effectiveness with which the selected style was used was the measure of the architect's skill. But with our third category we really come to the contemporary attempts I have spoken of to reconcile necessary changes with the associations church architecture is expected to possess. My third category one might call that of pictorial charm, in which period detail is considerably simplified and often replaced, as the point on which stress is laid, by attempts to recapture the adventitious charm of materials, as found in the vernacular. This kind of architecture suffers from being largely a personal one: style degenerates into mannerism and solid structure evaporates into scenic effect. Its virtues are reticence and refined taste; its defects those that go with its virtues: a tendency to rely on charm of surface and colour to the exclusion of the more austere architectural qualities, and on the exploitation of a rather spurious

kind of good craftsmanship which, when combined with period treatment that is reminiscent rather than archaeological, produces a somewhat genteel character. In short, it is the architecture of good taste, in contrast with the florid Victorian taste of, say, Bassett Keeling—or any architect exemplifying that characteristic Victorian blend of vigour and vulgarity.

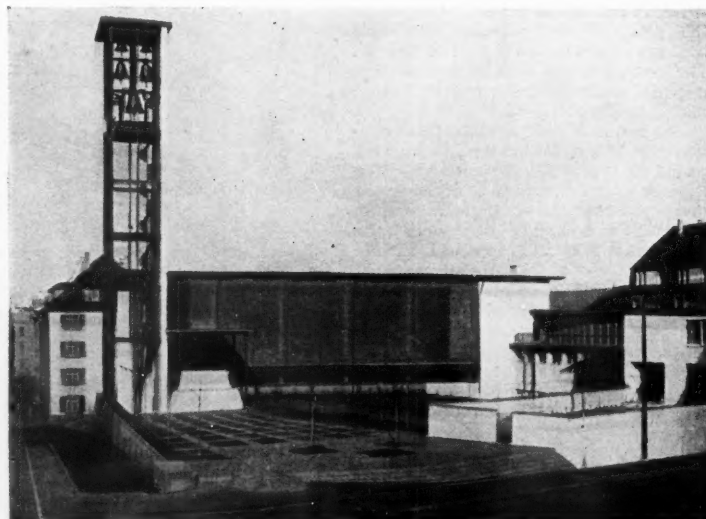
The favourite motifs of this style are the square tower with pyramidal roof and tiny openings, derived from the picturesquely simple architecture of Italian hill-towns, simplified Gothic arched and vaulting, plain expanses of brickwork often showing a fashionable Swedish influence and, in the fittings, pastel colours, limed oak and arty heraldry. The Arts and Crafts movement replaces the Camden Society as the source of stylistic inspiration.

The most distinguished architect of this school is Edward Maufe, and I hope he will not misunderstand me if I say that Maufe is the J. M. Barrie of architecture. The people who see nothing in Barrie's works but his whimsicality and sentimentality forget two things: that he was a virtuoso of the theatre, with that supreme craftsmanship that conceals its artfulness, making the result seem not only easy but natural; and that historically he was one of the pioneers who first broke away from the school of elaborate verisimilitude and indicated the profound potentialities of

symbolism, parable and allusion. His weakness is, of course, the triviality of much of his thought, which is out of proportion to his masterly technique in putting it across.

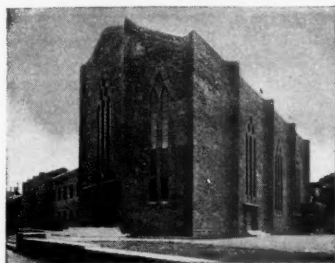
My fourth category is a more straightforward one. It might simply be described as "modern," for it results from allowing the modern technique of plan analysis and free expression of structure to dictate outward appearance, and derives architectural character from the exploitation of characteristically modern building techniques. I cannot think of any churches in this country that conform wholeheartedly to what is called the Modern Movement. I suppose the first one abroad was the famous reinforced concrete church at Le Raincy, by the brothers Perret, in which for the first time the dynamic nature of concrete construction showed its affinity with the Gothic. The one I illustrate is of later date and comes from Switzerland. It is interesting in that it shows a characteristically "modern" attempt to maintain an ecclesiastical character; for the plan, since it has to serve the same purpose, is approximately that of a conventional church, and the tower remains to perform its traditional function of housing a peal of bells; so the general exterior form is recognizable as that of a church and the two characteristic church elements, the size of the window-area and the verticality of the tower, have been stressed. But they have been stressed in the modern way, by dramatizing their structural character, the former as a sheer wall of concrete and glass brick, the latter as an open lattice of steel. The bare steel cage of the tower is an exact equivalent of the open-work belfry the most ambitious medieval masons (or, for that matter, Sir Christopher Wren and Hawksmoor) aimed at. But whether the strangeness of this original, but eminently contemporary, version of church architecture is satisfying to the pious worshipper is another matter. I would give it high marks as a modern building; but its beauty, just because of its modernity, is an intrinsic one; whereas it is not abstract beauty the church-goer wants but the sanctity of forms that he has always associated with beauty.

My fifth category is the modernistic, about which little need be said. For the character of all modernistic architecture is the same. It is a manufactured style that pretends to be in the line of succession to the "period" styles, but of course has none of their authenticity as its purpose is only to create a superficial modishness. Its other name, "jazz-modern," indicates



MODERNISM. Frank expression of volume, exploiting the more graceful characteristics of modern structural technique. An interesting building, but lacking in ecclesiastical feeling for the layman who chiefly reacts to the symbolism of architecture. Church at Basel, Switzerland, by Egger and Burckhardt.

its favourite motifs. As it is vulgar and without dignity, churches built in this spirit have nothing more in common with the real aims of church architecture than the stunt wedding that takes



In this church decorative shapes, like those of the ribs projecting from the walls, typical of the devices used in the modernistic category, are combined with an eclectic spirit in the windows. At Sutton, by Welch and Lander.

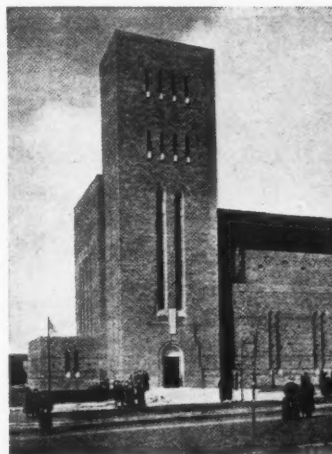
place in a submarine has with a religious ceremony.

Finally, there is one remaining category. It is a difficult one to define but it includes several churches built recently in this country, churches which, considering that they are the outcome of compromise, have gone a long way towards solving the problem satisfactorily. One might label theirs the symbolist or evocative style. Their architects have for the most part eschewed "period" of any kind, either as a way of recapturing the quality of a past age or as a way of reconstructing pictorial effects. But they have preserved the general outline to which a church traditionally conforms; in fact they have gone further and dramatized this outline—the tower, the long roof-line and the array of vertical windows, for example—so that these reproduce the character of a church even when the ecclesiastical detail is lacking. That is to say, they have retained the associational element in church architecture in the general outline though not in

the detail. These churches are characterized by the restrained use of traditional materials, especially brick. They are simple, but often have, for ornament, some conventional sculpture or architectural symbol, which again suggest the ecclesiastical atmosphere without copying it in detail. Their chief virtues are the dignity they derive from solid massing and from reliance on simple geometry for effect; their defects are generally to be found inside, where many difficulties arise when fittings and the like have to be designed on this rather non-committal principle. The result is apt to resemble an insipid version of the free eclecticism of categories two and three. Typical of the best of this category is the work of F. X. Velarde, a couple of whose churches are illustrated. Another more recent effort in this category is illustrated on pages 49 and 50 of this issue.

Instead of offering any solution as a result of this analysis of the six kinds of contemporary church architecture, I am going to evade the issue by saying that the real answer to the question, what should a modern church be like?, is not a strictly architectural one, but a matter of the place of religious worship in modern society. I am going to point out that the complete change in church architecture at the time of the Renaissance coincided with a change from medieval mystery to the rational atmosphere of the preaching house. A new integration of religion with life will enable church architecture to find its natural contemporary character. If such an integration consists of a re-establishment of the medieval mysteries, then Mr. Comper will be as right as anyone (though it will have to be accompanied by a re-establishment of Guild craftsmanship and handicraft methods of working materials). The solutions offered by our second category (period eclecticism) and our third (pictorial charm) cannot be the right ones as they are purely synthetic, the one a synthesis of styles and the other of effects; our fifth category, (the modernistic) is expressive solely of its

own cleverness. Our sixth (the symbolist), though with all sincerity, has tried to anticipate events by staging a system of symbolism before the usages that should give birth to it are developed. It only shows, like all formalist architecture, that you cannot invent a style. But its suggestive symbolism is often allied to a simple, solid architectural framework of well-used materials and well-studied proportions, so it is in a position to contribute something positive towards a future church architecture. There remains the fourth or "modern" category, from which an integrated church architecture has at least the possibility of developing; but only, I repeat, in an integrated religious society. This category is honest architecturally, and if it is negative, it is exactly as negative as is the relationship of the church to the age that produced it.

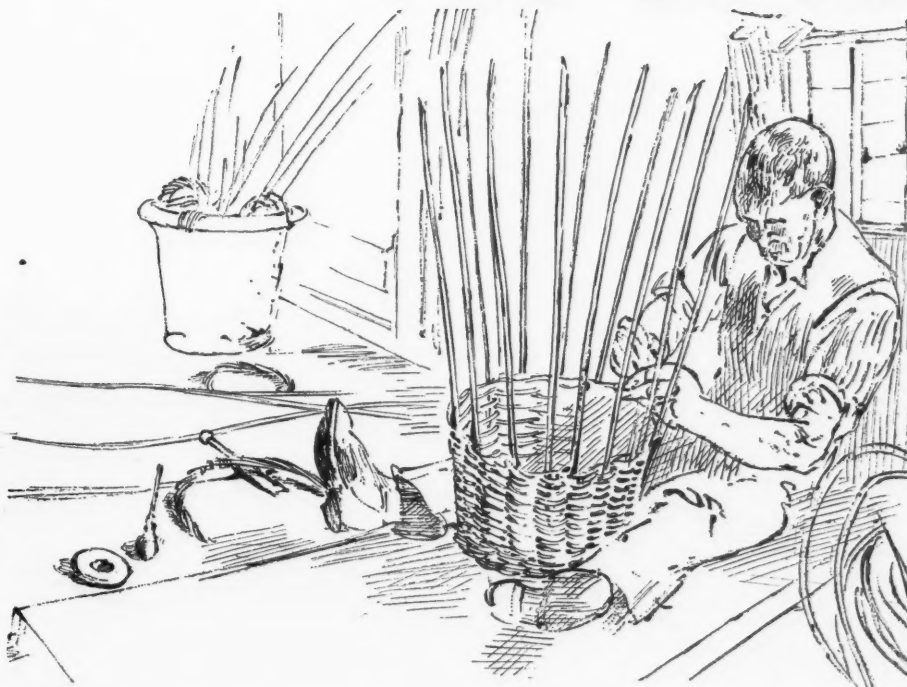


One of the best modern churches of the type classified in this article under **SYMBOLISM**: dignity and ecclesiastical character are obtained by a general, not a particular, dependence on the past. St. Gabriel's, Blackburn, by F. X. Velarde.

COUNTRY CRAFTSMEN

The Basket Maker

By Thomas Hennell

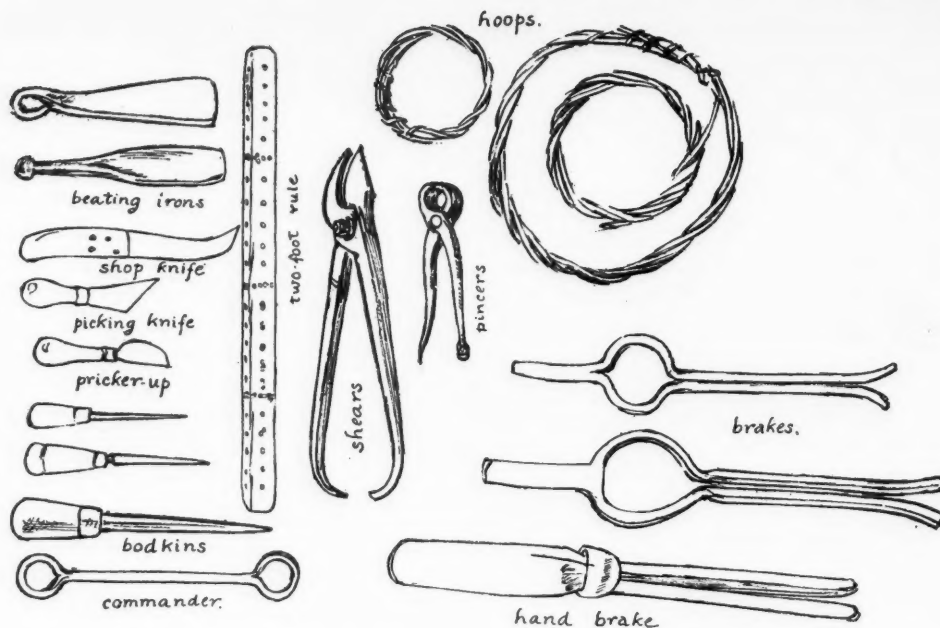


NEAR the top of a rambling town in North Kent, which overspreads a chalk hill and commands a view up the river, with castle, cathedral and other landmarks upon the far banks, is a long, ancient workshop. This building stands off from the road some thirty feet, and is partly concealed by a mean shop built in the 'sixties. The old workshop has an earth floor and half-brick walls interspersed with timber; it is open to the rafters, which are tiled in general intention, though patched with board and galvanized sheeting. A long, irregular window, or series of lights, runs along the rear wall south-eastwards.

On the front of this building is painted "Turner, Estd. 1715", and in letters running vertically down the sides of the door, "Basket Maker." In front of this door one usually sees a heap of baskets—some new, some that have been repaired, and not a few derelicts. In these days crooked obstructed entrances are common enough, but this entrance is even more blocked-up and crooked than black-out regulations require. Inside, however, the workshop is very

THE BASKET MAKER'S TOOLS

The tools used in the basket maker's craft. All these are used in the actual manufacture of the baskets except those called "brakes", which are used in preparing the willow-rods. This has to be done some while beforehand, when the rods are still green. The drawings illustrating this article are by the author.



clean; even neat in its own way. At the end by the door, along one side and part of the other, are set up bundles of willow and cane, the raw materials of the owner's craft. In front of these bundles and on a table and shelves and hung up out of the way, are many more baskets, of forms and sizes for different uses.

There are large coarse baskets for cement-carrying; other large ones still used in a few market-gardens; there is one of those bread-baskets shaped to fill the frame in front of a bicycle, and a round bread-basket such as the van-man brings on his elbow; hampers and laundry-baskets, wood-baskets and dogs' sleeping-baskets, and a multitude of smaller kinds of shopping-baskets, work-baskets, picnic-baskets, egg-baskets and blackberrying-baskets; each right and indispensable for its destined use. In this workshop have been made the body of a lady's pony-chaise, balloon-baskets in the early nineteen-hundreds, and passenger-baskets big enough to hold fifteen persons. These last were ordered in place of rope-ladders for the convenience of passengers wishing to be picked up or disembarked at places along the African coasts.

At the far end of the room is the stove on one side, on the other a stout plank—almost a platform of wood, with a narrower wedge-like

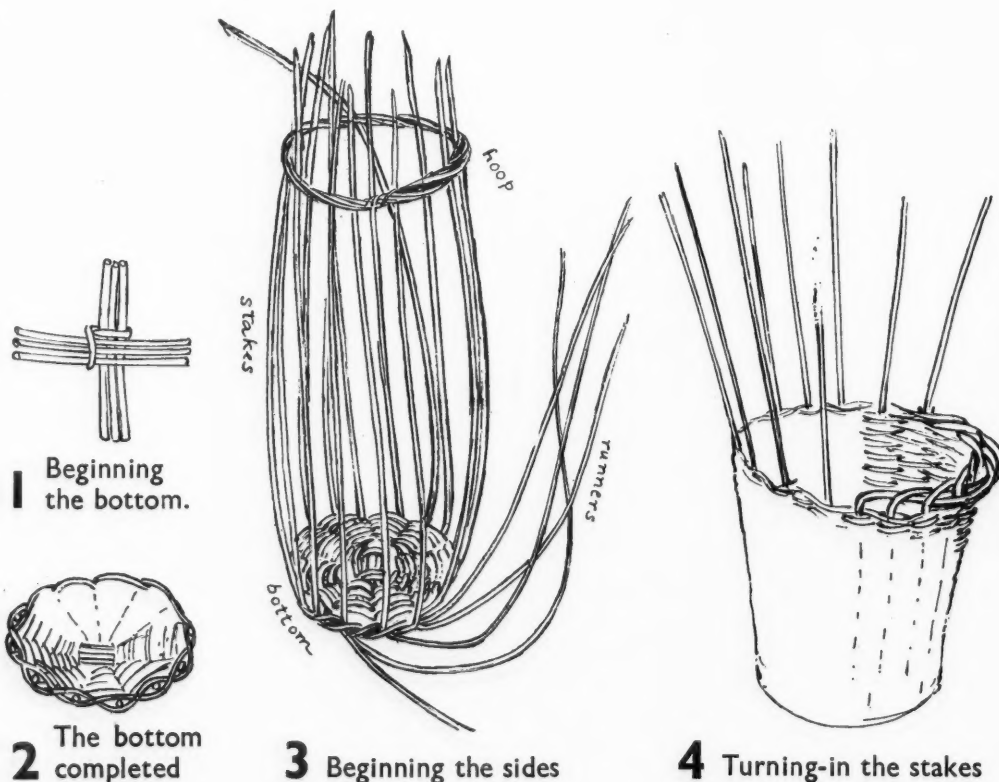
plank upon it and a wooden box behind which is the basket maker's seat. And on the wedge, which shelves away from him, he rests the bottom of the basket upon which he is working. Near at hand are some hoops of twisted willow, in several sizes; these are prepared as gauges for the round baskets of standard capacity. And an oaken two-foot rule with inches marked in brass nails, because a folding rule is easily trodden on and broken.

As I entered the shop, Mr. Turner had finished the bottom and started the sides of a wood-basket made of cane, in shape like a large wastepaper-basket. The ribs standing up all round rotated as he turned the bottom to weave a length of cane in and out among them. These canes are twenty-four feet long, they are

doubled like hairpins in the bundle as bought. It is fascinating to watch the constant turning of the upright canes; but if one is close, it is well to look out for the free end of the binding cane which flies about, like a long whiplash, in all directions.

Mr. Turner presently began to talk about these canes, which come from Malay and are said to grow there much as brambles grow with us. They lie tangled in all directions, and the man who walks into a cane-brake may never get out, for the leaves set all one way, and the canes will tie him up.

"When we used to get these canes, before they bundled them as they do now, they were of all manner of sizes. I measured one over eighty feet long. But though so long they

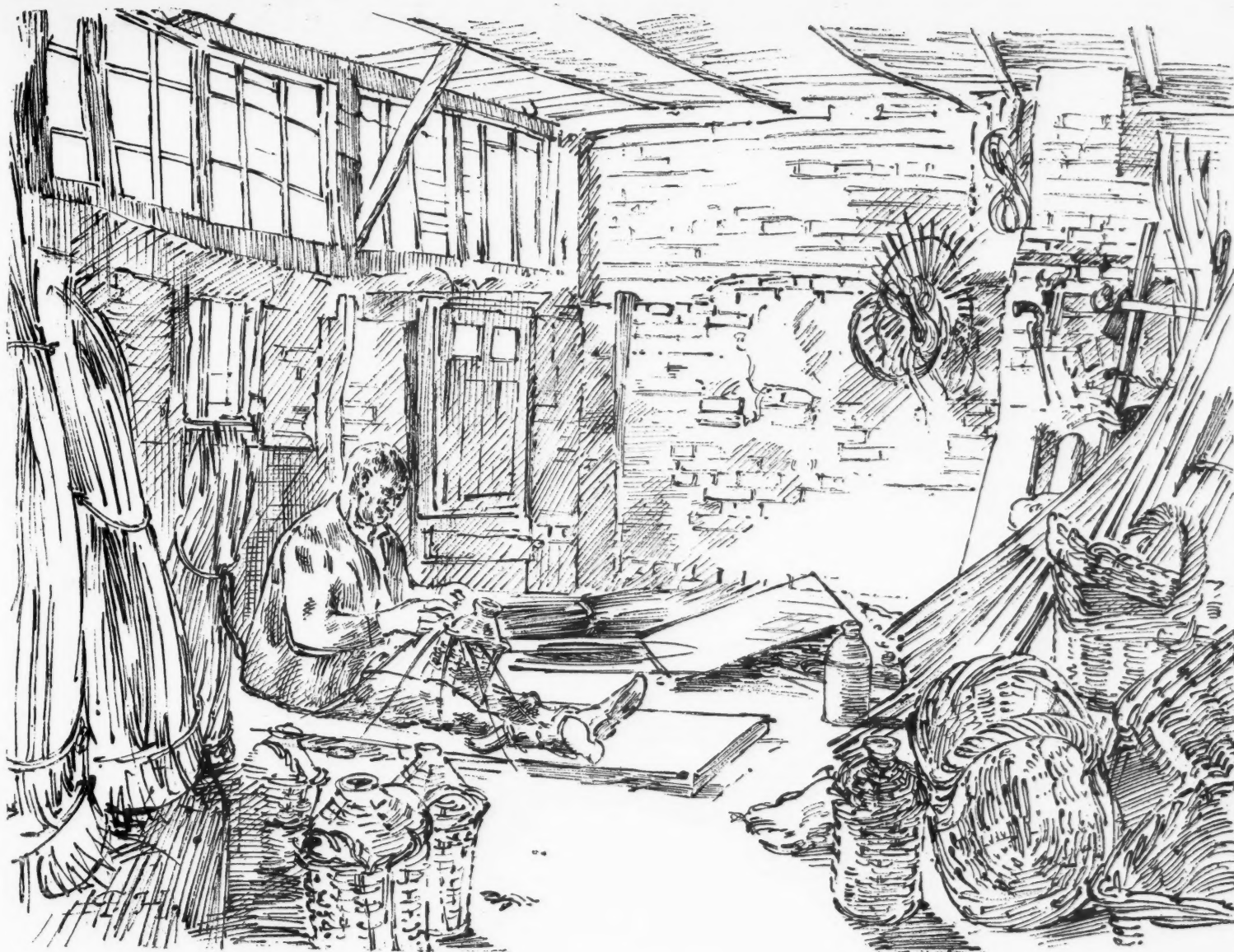


STAGES IN THE MAKING OF A WOOD-BASKET

2 The bottom completed

3 Beginning the sides

4 Turning-in the stakes



Mr. Turner, basket maker, in his workshop

taper so little you would hardly know which end was which."

Strong fingers are needed to work these canes and to make, as Mr. Turner does, a tight, immovable job of the basket. The cane has been soaked overnight; taken out in the morning, it remains pliable enough to work all day. A flat piece of iron is used to drive down the

binder, especially when making the top of the basket, and there is an iron pin for opening the mesh where other pieces are to be inserted; for instance, in working a pair of handles. But the fingers do the main work—stretching, weaving, plaiting or twisting, poking through and fastening. For trimming-off the spare ends is a pair of shears, like long-handled garden secateurs. And a lead weight is spiked on to the basket-bottom while the sides are going up; this keeps it steady, counterbalancing the top-heaviness of the ribs which are standing upright. As the rim of the basket is bound, these rib-ends are turned, worked in and cut close.

As one finds when watching any skilled craftsman, the precise movements of the hand are elusive. But it seems that the fingers do most of the work in holding and guiding; the thumbs not so much, and that, through skill and practice, Mr. Turner is lighter-handed than to a beginner would seem possible. On this point he remarked that it was usually thought unfair for a workman to be asked to make both sorts of basket, cane and willow, as each has a different feel and a different effect upon the hands. Some who can handle willow would rub their fingers raw in a day with

cane; but he had had much practice in both and didn't mind.

Mrs. Turner, who has evidently been the greatest help to him, was skilled in making cane seats for chairs. This work was done at home, and split cane, instead of round, was used. But the worst of it was, when the children came in from school it was all over the place. Unlike the basket-cane, it was spoilt, and you couldn't work it, once it had been trodden on.

Here I mentioned that one of my neighbours practises basketry for a hobby; but his lady discourages the pursuit, finding that it makes too much litter about the house.

"Ah," said Mr. Turner, "it would do good if the Government, as they might well afford to do, set aside a fund for teaching basketry to the many people who find time hang heavy on their hands. But it would only do for a hobby. Several people had tried to revive the trade: Lord Northcliffe for one. But they never went to the root of the matter—they never even began to organize the supply of raw material.

"Basket-willow takes three years to grow—nature does that, and you can't hurry nature. Then there's a great deal of care needed, besides cutting it once a year—you may let it go two



5 Finishing the top

(After this all that remains to be done is to fix the battens underneath and add the handles.)

years perhaps; but more than that and it gets overgrown, and will never come the same again. It wants management the same as fruit-trees, and a practical man who has always been used to it—not one that learns a little bit out of books. Why, you can't buy it out of the shops without knowledge; such rubbish some of them keep, enough to ruin an inexperienced man."

He pointed to the bundles and explained their quality further.

This willow is in straight peeled rods about twelve feet long. In some bundles white and in some red: this is because the willow-bark contains a red astringent dye. If steamed with the bark on this dye penetrates the wood; but if they are peeled first, it remains white.

Eleven shillings a bundle is about the price; but carriage may add another four or five shillings to this. A shopping-basket which I bought for my housekeeper because she needed one cost four-and-sixpence. A wood-basket to hold a bushel, and with two wooden pieces clamped to its bottom for it to rest on, cost eight-and-six: Mr. Turner can make two in a day. But formerly, with orders for a large number, he could get on much faster. A baker's bread-basket costs seven-and-sixpence.

My basket is finished quite beautifully, touched over with "outside oak" varnish. The baskets with plaited edges are not much more expensive.

I wanted to find out more statistics, but, like a true craftsman, Mr. Turner was impatient of that way of measuring the work. It has always been a deuced hard struggle when he was working for all he was worth to bring up the family of six. They have all done well, but not one in the old trade. He used always to be singing or whistling at his work; but not late years—these times get you down. Surely it must have been his father's Irish workman, whose mate he was and who taught him the skill, who taught him to sing also. "A splendid man he was and a capital good temper, except only when he went on a bout of drinking. Then he was a devil. He would fight anybody, and if no one was in his way, fight the wall."

One could not come away from the basket-maker without feeling, in a serious and unusual way, that what is meant by grit and English character has not nearly so much to do with Cabinet Ministers and their slogans as with such men as this: who really have never admitted defeat, who still persist in the thankless, inglorious task of making something of common use rather better, and all the time with less profit to themselves out of it, than those who rule or those who patronize them.



Unit Architect -

A note entitled "Unit Planning in Primitive Architecture," published last July, illustrated the village of Metameur in Southern Tunisia, which is entirely composed of narrow cell-like vaulted houses super-imposed, sometimes to a height of four storeys, one above the other, the effect greatly resembling the cliff dwellings of the troglodytes not far away. But this architectural type is not confined to remote Arabian villages. It can be found today in several parts of Europe, notably on

the Greek island of Thera, where these photographs were recently taken. Troglodyte caves are found on the island as well as detached houses, for the simple house with the vaulted roof is often found in the neighbourhood of troglodyte dwellings, though their exact relationship has never been properly established.

The Theraen cell-house, illustrated here, is the earliest type of permanent house construction known. Excavations made on the



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ture in the Mediterranean

island by Fouqué for geological purposes in 1806 confirmed that the type of the contemporary house corresponds in every detail to its predecessor of the stone age. Typical of this primitive cell-dwelling is that the upper units have arched floors, formed simply by the vault of the unit below. Some of the houses on Thera have had a flat roof added, for drying fruit or collecting water, but the primitive form is easily distinguishable. European specimens of the vaulted cell-house are chiefly confined to the Aegean Sea, but are occasionally found elsewhere on the shores of the Mediterranean, even as far north as Naples.

1, a close-up view of cell-dwellings on Thera. 2, the village of Megalochorion, on the island, closely resembling, both in its components and in silhouette, the Tunisian village of Metameur. 3, 4, troglodyte dwellings at Himerowigia, on the island of Thera, with a single free-standing cell-dwelling in the centre. See also the frontispiece to this issue. The photographs are by Bernard Rudofsky.



4

BOOKS

The Science of Tomorrow

TOWN AND COUNTRY TOMORROW. By Geoffrey Boumphrey. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons. Price 2s. 6d.

THERE is now a popular idea that architects will be well placed after the war to cash in on a period of reconstruction, and that plans are even now being prepared by Lord Reith for the City of Tomorrow. Neither the dignified nor the popular press has shown anything more than this sentimental attitude to the practical subject of planning, which they have placed on a pedestal along with charity, hygiene, and the other minor virtues. Great confusion exists about the qualities of garden cities, Wren's plan for London, the Green Belt, the Bressey report, and all the other publicised odds and ends, particularly among people who ought to know better. "Town Planning" is thought of as a tedious mixture of all these things, but one which everyone agrees is enormously serious.

The fact is that nobody agrees at all, and that the real problems of planning have not yet been generally faced. The primary issues are political, and concern the blimps' and bolshies' ways of sorting out the legal and economic tangle of property ownership and compensation. Even if agreement can be reached on these, there remain the secondary issues—the technical ones—about which disagreement is quite as violent. The discussions are carried out with only the slenderest technical data, because there has been no organized research into the subject. And to organize such research at all seems to be regarded suspiciously, as a political activity. So planning, both large and small scale, instead of being a matter of study and precision, has become a party racket, while a few rule-of-thumb restrictions are administered by pedestrian officials in a fog of uninformed guesswork.

Mr. Boumphrey rightly adopts to all this a rather hard-boiled attitude which will be a breath of fresh air to people who are accustomed to the vapourings of some writers on Urbanism. He summarizes much of the technical research so far carried out independently, and gives a good idea of all the controversies, even the financial ones. Such a profusion of common sense may well (as the publishers claim) "serve to enlighten the general public." And, receiving the book in smouldering Southampton, it seemed to me that the public is hungry for some palatable planning, and that informed opinion might again get the last word (as it did in the deep-shelter controversy). A half-crown book, I thought, is just the thing, and Mr. Boumphrey (remembering his irresistible writing on industrial design in this journal a few years ago) just the man. Unfortunately, the task of combining a pep-talk with a thesis has been too much for him this time. The public will not be stirred to comprehending action.

If you are not put off by its stuffy "popular science" presentation (all statistics written out for the dumb layman), you will find here a well-arranged survey of current town-planning theory and practice. These "discussion books" are intended, I suppose, to inform and not to convert—to show at least three sides to every question while advocating nothing. Mr. Boumphrey gives plenty of information, but in this matter it is impossible to remain impartial, and you are not left in doubt about what he advocates himself. The only ambiguity is, naturally, political. The solution he proposes is the hardest of all to achieve constitutionally. The provision of tall, long, thin apartment buildings decently spaced out on the Gropius-Corbusier principle can be shown to be economically feasible—to give a return on capital—but it could never really be attempted on a large scale without some form of land nationalization. The German Municipal *Lex Adickes* could hardly be applied on this scale. The author combines this *ville verte* proposition with the radial parkway or green wedge one, and he applies the whole to the conversion of the "old towns first." As usual,

the arguments for flats and against cottages are not entirely convincing. So long as this matter, among others, remains one of opinion and conjecture, any large-scale development will be premature. Only when proper statistics can be obtained—by some sort of university foundation for public opinion (or mass-observation) together with a physical laboratory—can the organization of room, house, street, town, country and industry be attempted with precision and confidence. No one designs a machine by guesswork, without due calculation and experiment. It is pretentious folly to attempt the whole machinery of living until calculation shows every part of the machine to be sound.

TIM BENNETT

The Influential Arts

STAGE AND FILM DECORATION. By R. Myerscough-Walker. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons. Price 21s.

DARK spaces, pools of coloured light, colour in more than life-size areas, people strangely dressed and quite frightening nearby, with vast eyelashes and complexions like sunsets, this is the stage behind the scenes. Out in front, in the audience, people find themselves moved as never elsewhere, so that they come home more gentle or more lively, posing as little maybe or just day-dreaming. The spell of the theatre is spun in many odd ways, what is good in literature is often "bad theatre," what is bad art can be theatrically beautiful. The spell, the hush in the opera house during one of Wagner's moments of superb theatre magic, is also visiting Drury Lane across the way, where Dorothy Dickson, half blinded with limelight, leans languidly, glittering, against the marbled proscenium, behind which the latest Ivor Novello spectacle is in progress.

Mr. Cochran, in his foreword to this book, quotes James Laver: "The theatre might play, perhaps, a preponderant part in the saving of Europe and of mankind..." The new architecture might do the same, and writers believe this

too of their art, but certainly the theatre and the film have had the greater chance. In Lyons's the other day, I heard an old man say to the Nippy: "You're very like Evelyn Laye, my dear!" "Evelyn Laye!" said the offended girl, "I'm Bette Davis." I looked, and she was! Un-offended at being likened to someone, she was extremely annoyed that her consciously assumed disguise was not instantly recognizable. Bette Davis, yes; but who is influenced by Gropius? Only a handful of underworked architects.

This book is like the theatre itself with its generous flow of ideas, many of them thrown into the air and left for you to catch and toy with afterwards, a not unpleasant feature. The scene changes are sometimes a little too many for the space available, especially in the historical part, which the author himself calls "potted." The present is obviously a good moment to sum up the inter-wars theatre and cinema, and Mr. Walker is well acquainted with the subject. What a pity, then, that his space is a little too limited for

the development of his thoughtful comments. His own coloured drawings and the photographs are well chosen to illustrate each point he makes.

The main point, and a most interesting one, is the difference between stage and film. Briefly, the stage must have make-believe—and employs painters, while the film must have realism—and employs architects. Yet the realism is in its turn an elaborate game of make-believe. You know the sort of thing, plaster linen-fold panelling, paper marble floors and fretwork ironwork. It must be so, says the book, "for reasons which are difficult of written analysis." Yet the German film settings illustrated are admittedly the most photogenic and in my opinion the most beautiful, although the least realistic. A film I saw in Germany about Joan of Arc had this same quality, truly mediaeval in feeling, without the use, if I remember, of a cusp or a crocket. Incidentally, Charles Ricketts's settings and dresses for the Shaw play on this subject achieved the same thing. Our twentieth-century eyes cannot enjoy the correct presentation of Rembrandt's Delft, for they are clouded by Pont Street.

There are many trains of thought on such a subject. One of them started in the cemetery at Highgate, where this book had sent me to look at the charming epitaph on the tomb of Friese Greene, the inventor (not apparently Edison) of Kinematography. Which, I wondered, of the two revolutionaries buried here, has made the greater stir, Friese Greene or Karl Marx?

HERBERT TAYLER

The Golden Age of Furniture

MASTERPIECES OF ENGLISH FURNITURE AND CLOCKS
By R. W. Symonds. London: B. T. Batsford. Price £2 10s.

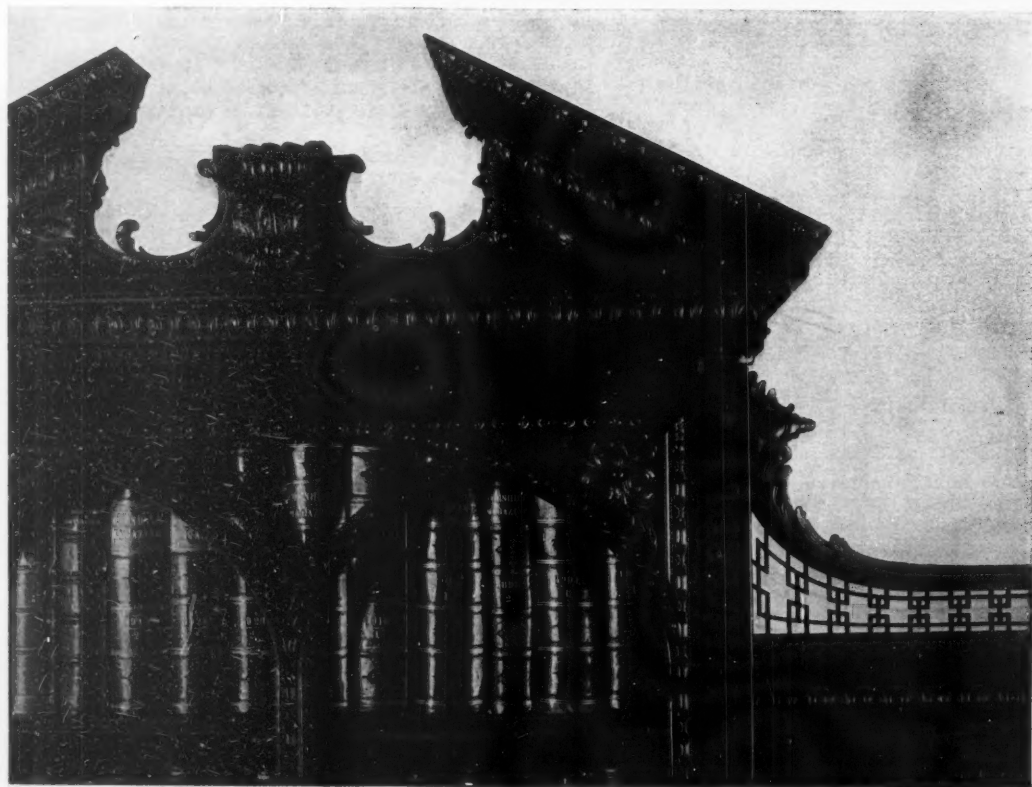
ON the title page of his new work Mr. Symonds describes its scope thus: "A Study of Walnut and Mahogany Furniture, and of the Associated Crafts of the Looking-glass Maker and Japanner, together with an Account of Thomas Tompion and other Famous Clock-Makers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." It is a book richly and appositely illustrated; and in his choice of subjects for the eight colour-plates and some 137 half-tone reproductions of excellent photographs, the author displays a sensitive and informed taste for the lovely things that adorned the golden age of furniture design. Among these illustrations are some unusual and curious objects: for example, an Orrery by Thomas Tompion and George Graham, an astrolabe clock by Tompion, and some portable barometers by Daniel Quare.

Mr. Symonds writes with the authority of a distinguished scholar. His text is illuminated by the illustrations; and his second chapter, which is concerned with the quality and design of mahogany furniture, is a swift, excellent survey of the conditions, economic, social, and artistic, under which eighteenth-century furniture was made. He devotes an entire chapter (the third) to a particular example of the work of William Vile: a royal cabinet, by a master architect in wood.

In no chapter are words wasted; in no paragraph are discursive or irrelevant views introduced. The author's concern is to state the facts about the way certain specialized craftsmen worked and the results they achieved with such a splendour of competence and invention. He quotes frequently from contemporary documents; and he knows exactly how much to quote. Few writers on the subject of antique furniture can resist interlarding their pages with super-fatted chunks of historical matter, lifted from early authorities; but Mr. Symonds has never adopted that sorry expedient for increasing the bulk, and thereby diluting the interest, of a book. Chapter V, on English Japan and Oriental Lacquer Furniture, is a model of concise statement. The last three chapters are on clockmakers and clocks, and are, perhaps, the most interesting in the book. Every one of the eight chapters is easy and pleasant to read, and they all suggest the great reserves of knowledge the author possesses, and what a considerable volume of research must have been undertaken before such a book could be written.

JOHN GLOAG

Right, a detail of the engraving on the back plate of a table clock by Thomas Tompion. Its date is between 1690 and 1695. Below, a detail of the famous Royal Cabinet, designed by William Vile for George III. It was part of the refurnishing of St. James's Palace, carried out between 1760 and 1764. From "Masterpieces of English Furniture and Clocks," by R. W. Symonds, reviewed on this page.



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N GLOAG

ANTHOLOGY

A Minority Opinion on Bath

You must know, I find nothing but disappointment at Bath; which is so altered, that I can scarce believe it is the same place that I frequented about thirty years ago. This place, which Nature and Providence seem to have intended as a resource from distemper and disquiet, is become the very centre of racket and dissipation. Instead of that peace, tranquillity, and ease, so necessary to those who labour under bad health, weak nerves, and irregular spirits; here we have nothing but noise, tumult, and hurry; with the fatigue and slavery of maintaining a ceremonial more stiff, formal, and oppressive than the etiquette of a German elector. I was impatient to see the boasted improvements in architecture, for which the upper parts of the town have been so much celebrated, and t'other day I made a circuit of all the new buildings. The Square, though irregular, is, on the whole, pretty well laid out, spacious, open, and airy; and, in my opinion, by far the most wholesome and agreeable situation in Bath, especially the upper side of it; but the avenues to it are mean, dirty, dangerous, and indirect. Its communication with the Baths, is through the yard of an inn, where the poor trembling valetudinarian is carried in a chair, betwixt the heels of a double row of horses, wincing under the curry-combs of grooms and postilions, over and above the hazard of being obstructed, or overturned by the carriages which are continually making their exit or their entrance—I suppose after some chairmen shall have been maimed, and a few lives lost by those accidents, the corporation will think, in earnest, about providing a more and commodious passage. The Circus is a pretty bauble, contrived for shew, and looks like Vespasian's amphitheatre turned outside in. If we consider it in point of magnificence, the great number of small doors belonging to the separate houses, the inconsiderable height of the different orders, the affected ornaments of the architrave, which are both childish and misplaced, and the areas projecting into the street, surrounded with iron rails, destroy a good part of its effect upon the eye; and, perhaps, we shall find it still more defective, if we view it in the light of convenience. The figure of each separate dwelling-house, being the segment of a circle, must spoil the symmetry of the rooms, by contracting them towards the street windows, and leaving a larger sweep in the space behind. If, instead of the areas and iron rails, which seem to be of very little use, there had been a corridore with arcades all round, as in Covent garden, the appearance of the whole would have been more magnificent and striking; those arcades would have afforded an agreeable covered walk, and sheltered the poor chairmen and their carriages from the rain, which is here almost perpetual. . . .

But, to return to the Circus; it is inconvenient from its situation, at so great a distance from all the markets, baths, and places of public entertainment. The only entrance to it, through Gay-street, is so difficult, steep, and slippery, that in wet weather it must be exceedingly dangerous, both for those that ride in carriages, and those that walk a-foot; and when the street is covered with snow, as it was for fifteen days successively this very winter, I don't see how any individual could go either up or down, without the most imminent hazard of broken bones. In blowing weather, I am told, most of the houses in this hill are smothered with smoke, forced down the chimneys, by the gusts of wind reverberated from the hill behind, which (I apprehend likewise) must render the atmosphere here more humid and unwholesome than it is in the square below; for the clouds, formed by the constant evaporation from the baths and rivers in the bottom, will, in their ascent this way, be first attracted and detained by the hill that rises close behind the Circus, and load the air with a perpetual succession of vapours. The same artist who planned the Circus, has likewise projected a Crescent; when that is finished, we shall probably have a Star; and those who are living thirty years hence, may, perhaps, see all the signs of the Zodiac exhibited in architecture at Bath. These, however fantastical, are still designs that denote some ingenuity and knowledge in the architect; but the rage of building has laid hold on such a number of adventurers, that one sees new houses starting up in every outlet and every corner of Bath; contrived without judgment, executed without solidity, and stuck together with so little regard to plan and propriety, that the different lines of the new rows and buildings interfere with, and intersect one another in every different angle of conjunction. They look like the wreck of streets and squares disjointed by an earthquake, which hath broken the ground into a variety of holes and hillocks; or, as if some Gothic devil had stuffed them altogether in a bag, and left them to stand higgledy piggedly, just as chance directed. What sort of a monster Bath will become in a few years, with those growing excrescences, may be easily conceived: but the want of beauty and proportion is not the worst effect of these new mansions; they are built so slight, with the soft crumbling stone found in this neighbourhood, that I shall never sleep quietly in one of them, when it blowed (as the sailors say) a cap-full of wind; and, I am persuaded, that my hind, Roger Williams, or any man of equal strength, would be able to push his foot through the strongest part of their walls, without any great exertion of his muscles. All these absurdities arise from the general tide of luxury, which hath overspread the nation, and swept away all, even the very dregs of the people.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

(The Expedition of Humphry Clinker, 1771)

MARGINALIA

Obituary



C. F. A. Voysey

The death of Charles Annesley Voysey was announced on February 13th. He was 83, and the last survivor (except, perhaps, for A. H. Mackmurdo) of the small group of artists and craftsmen who made the modest English house of the end of the last century a thing for the world to wonder at.

The most notable of those whose names are associated with his are Ernest Newton, C. R. Mackintosh and George Walton, and, as their immediate successors, Baillie Scott, Dunbar Smith, C. R. Ashbee, W. R. Lethaby and Guy Dawber; but Voysey was not only a pioneer among them but the most powerful of all in the influence his work exercised, chiefly because of his complete integrity and the noble simplicity of his architectural philosophy. Mackintosh may have shown more stylistic originality in his contribution to the movement towards architectural emancipation from academic historicism which was taking place at that time, and Norman Shaw (to whose share in the movement and to whose possible influence on Voysey a belated tribute is, by a coincidence, paid in this issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW) may have shown more fertility of invention; but it is always to Voysey that we return when we analyse the history of this remarkable period, as the man in whose work we find the germ of all that was of permanent value in the English domestic revival.

It is indeed a tribute to the remarkable nature of his achievement that influence such as his should have been exercised by one who practised exclusively in the domestic sphere—and on a very modest scale within that sphere. There can hardly be another case in the history of architecture when fame was not founded to some degree on the monumental.

But his very singleness of purpose and simplicity of character was of a piece with his simple but, at that time, revolutionary outlook on architecture. Before he came on the scene architecture, domestic as well as civic and ecclesiastical, was inextricably confused with antiquarianism. Period style was

A design by James Wyatt for a royal box which was erected in Westminster Abbey in 1784 for the Handel Commemoration. From an exhibition of architectural and decorative drawings at the Courtauld Institute (see note on this page). It is a pen and grey wash drawing, from the collection of Mr. Jacob Isaacs.



architecture, and the function of good building was lost in the irrelevant considerations of style and suffocated by all kinds of snobbish personal criteria. Into this stuffy atmosphere Voysey blew a breath of fresh air, both by the simple re-statement of the fact that a house could be designed first of all as a place to live in—as distinct from an occasion for the display of an architect's scholarship or ingenuity—and also by his rehabilitation of regional traditions and materials, whose charm and sincerity he found so much more worthy than the exotic materials of period-style architecture.

It is difficult for us today to appreciate the extent to which Voysey was a revolutionary, for we are surrounded by the indirect descendants of his small houses, debased almost beyond recognition but yet representing, however inadequately, a way of living infinitely more humane than the way he helped to break away from. We see the suburban villa and the garden suburb with its later accretion of snobbish stylistic symbols and in the light of the damage that motor transport has allowed it to do to the beauty of our countryside and the shapeliness of our cities. But in its pristine form and with the discipline of Voysey's own integrity of spirit, the small house in a vernacular style was a return to virtue and simplicity in architecture, for which we are all in his debt. It is not surprising that when von Hermann Muthesius, in the opening year of this century, introduced their work abroad, the movement Voysey and his colleagues were, perhaps unconsciously, founding came as a revelation to the academy-ridden Continent, which had not even experienced the healthy purgative of the Gothic Revival. Even its accidental qualities—the casual rather than conscious characteristics of English cottage planning—appeared to Continental eyes as a kind of inspired asymmetry. It has been well enough established by historians—in spite of the fact that Voysey would never identify himself with such offspring—that the movement towards a new sanity and a visual (as distinct from academic) aesthetic which flowered on the Continent in 1918 and subsequently in this country owes one of the biggest debts of all to Voysey and Mackintosh's pioneer work. That this must be so is clear enough directly we disinter the basic qualities of his work from the "period" trimmings of the Arts and

Crafts movement: the beaten copper work and heart-pierced settles of the advanced interior of 1905. But his temperamental reticence asked for no fame among the general public. He was one of the great men in architecture of the past fifty years, yet all a popular even; paper could say in a short paragraph reporting his death was that "he achieved a wide reputation for his design of interiors, chimney pieces, hinges, furniture, wallpapers and tapestries." But he would not have minded, for the unity of all the parts of a house, however insignificant, and the maintenance of quality in them all was one of the things he stood for.

It is to the credit of the architectural profession as a whole, however, that they did give some formal recognition to the greatness of his achievement before he died. Last year he was awarded the R.I.B.A.'s Royal Gold Medal for architecture and therefore has his name inscribed on the same panel as such other pioneers as Ernest Newton, H. P. Berlage and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Those who had the privilege of meeting Voysey in recent years remember him as a gentle, courteous man who received one in his characteristically furnished study at the top of a long flight of stairs in St. James's and talked about times and events that no one else remembered, or as a shrunken figure in blue enveloped in a large chair at the Arts Club, where he was accustomed to spend many of his days. But his death is not the passing of a rather tired old man but the disappearance of our closest link with one of the most creditable episodes in the whole history of English architecture.

J. M. R.

Architectural Drawings

During the whole of February an unusual and most interesting exhibition was to be seen at the Courtauld Institute of Art, Portman Square. It comprised a collection of miscellaneous architectural drawings and water-colours, entirely drawn from private sources, chosen both to illustrate the considerable intrinsic aesthetic interest of such drawings and to draw attention to the value of original drawings in providing information about the history of buildings, as well as the evolution of architects' styles—information which often cannot be obtained elsewhere.

This kind of information, of course,

is dependent on knowledgeable interpretation, and the Courtauld exhibition was notable for an exceptionally well-produced catalogue, in which each item was fully annotated, both with a very scholarly analysis of where the interest in each case lay, and with useful references to comparative documentation. The exhibits were also, with the same end in view, supplemented by photographs of some of the buildings they related to.

The architects and artists represented were rather miscellaneous. A large number were Italian; these included several good examples of such well-known subjects as stage-sets by members of the Bibiena family, a number of small sketches of only specialist interest and two or three items of first-rate importance. Among the latter were a pen and bistre-wash drawing from the studio of Bernini, showing on the same sheet several projects by Bernini. One of these is an early one for the Palazzo Chigi on the Piazza Apostoli at Rome, in which the compiler of the catalogue finds direct evidence of the influence of Michelangelo. The façade of this building was begun in 1665 and has a colossal order such as had not been used in Rome since Michelangelo's Capitol palaces. There was also an interesting and elaborate—though not very beautiful—design for a sculptured wall panel, attributed to Cherubino Alberti.

Among the English drawings were a rather insipid design for a belvedere by Sir John Soane, a Vanbrugh sketch for a gateway at Blenheim—not corresponding exactly to any of the gates as built, but resembling the main entrance to the park from Woodstock—and (of more unusual interest) a design by James Wyatt for a temporary Royal Box erected in Westminster Abbey in 1784 for the Handel Commemoration. The compiler of the catalogue mentions that this Box is described at length in

the Dublin (1785) edition of Charles Burney's *Account of the Musical Performances . . . in Commemoration of Handel*, and quotes the following passage:

" . . . Application was next made to Mr. James Wyatt, the architect, to furnish plans for the necessary decorations of the abbey; drawings of which having been shown to His Majesty were approved. The general idea was to produce the effect of a royal musical chapel, with the orchestra terminating one end, and the accommodations for the Royal Family, the other.

" . . . all for receiving their Majesties . . . so wonderfully corresponded with the style of architecture of this venerable and beautiful structure that there was nothing which did not harmonize with the principle tone of the building. . . . At the east end of the aisle, just before the back of the choir-organ, some of the pipes of which were visible below, a throne was erected in a beautiful Gothic style, corresponding with that of the abbey, and a centre box, richly decorated and furnished with crimson satin, fringed with gold, for the reception of their Majesties and the Royal Family; on the right hand of which was a box for the Bishops, and on the left for the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Immediately below the King's box was placed one for the Directors themselves. Behind and on each side of the throne were seats for their Majesty's suite, maids of honour, grooms of the bed-chamber, pages, etc."

But perhaps the most spectacular of all the exhibits, foreign or English, was a large perspective view of Fonthill Abbey, painted in water-colour by John Smith, from the collection of Roger Senhouse. This picture is not only an interesting document because it shows in detail one of the many versions of Wyatt's fantastic masterpiece, but is also an inspiring piece of pictorial interpretation. Indeed the sublime aspect of the building John Smith's picture gives it must be the

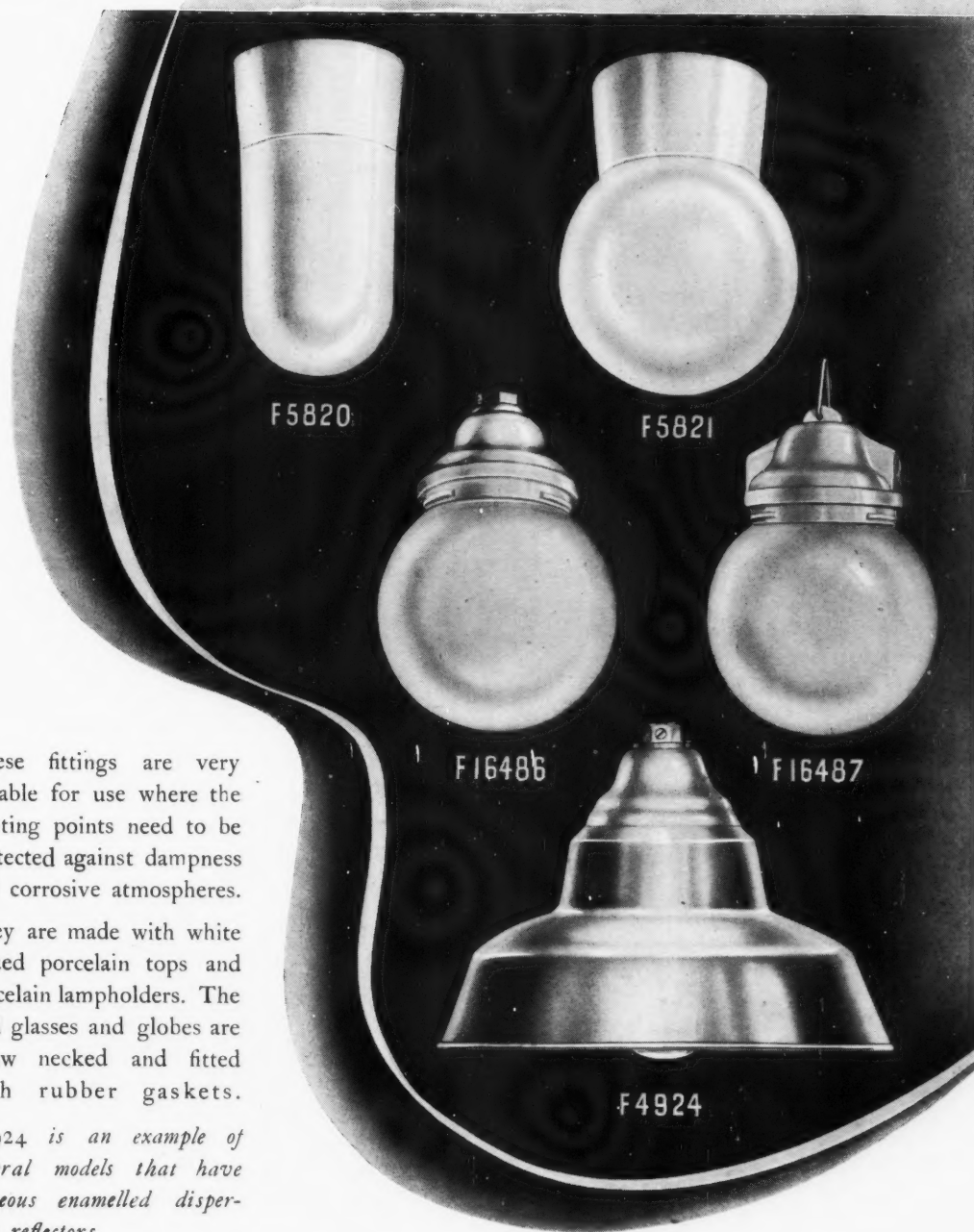
FOOTNOTE TO NORMAN SHAW



Many are the roles that Richard Norman Shaw played as an architect—some of them are identified in Dr. Pevsner's article on pages 41-46—but one role that was never associated with his name is that of the pedantic antiquarian. Indeed, he is chiefly famous for the virtuosity with which he combined motifs from many periods and styles. But the illustrations above show him in the surprising character of a literal copyist. On the left is an aisle window from the old village church of St. Bartholomew, Richard's Castle, Herefordshire; on the right is a window from a church which Norman Shaw built in 1891, All Saints', Richard's Castle, there- quarters of a mile from the old one, just across the border in Shropshire. The church is typical of Norman Shaw's quieter English-style churches, but for some reason of his own he chose to copy this one window almost stone for stone from the old one close by.



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nearest possible expression—far nearer than anything that was ever built—of the vision that inhabited Beckford's mind.

A Chance in a Thousand

Plenty has already been written about the opportunities that will be open to Lord Reith, in his new capacity, to influence public taste and improve standards generally, but these are mostly opportunities that will arise in the future. However, judging from a recent paragraph in the *Evening Standard*, quoted below, he is also concerning himself with matters of immediate application. The proposal outlined has quite sensational potentialities. At the time of writing no more information about the design of the furniture is available than the rather non-committal statements quoted, but if the designs are as good and as thoughtfully standardized as they should be—with all the talent in the country at Lord Reith's service—his scheme will improve public standards at one blow in a way undreamt-of by the D.I.A.

"Lord Reith, Minister of Works and Public Buildings, is acting as buying agent for Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Minister of Health, in the purchase of many thousands of chairs, tables, wardrobes, bedsteads and other articles of household furniture.

"They are for the use of people who, having been evacuated to avoid danger or sent to reception areas after being bombed out of their homes, are to be accommodated in empty or only partly-furnished houses.

"The furniture will be standardised in style and quality. Chairs will be of the Windsor type. Tables will be plain in character, though polished.

"Because it is impossible to use ship space for importing wood for furniture, the Timber Controller has released large supplies of birch, beech, oak and chestnut, grown at home. The only imported wood to be employed is a quantity of ash, which he has in stock. The lighter parts of the furniture, such as chair seats and wardrobe panels, will be in polished plywood.

"Requests for tenders have gone out to cabinet-making firms in various parts of the country. As it will be mass produced, the Government will be able to buy on cheap terms. It is proposed to have the furniture made at places as near as possible to the districts where it is needed, to reduce transport."

Good Advice from Scotland

It is a common and entertaining trait of the Scots to be suspicious that, if they are treated as merely part of the population of Britain, along with the English, they are somehow going to be forced into an inferior position, and to protest in advance accordingly. But there is sufficient reason in Robert Hurd's pleas for separate planning

for Scotland in a recent issue of *The Listener* to make it interesting as something more than new evidence of the Scots behaving true to type.

His article is called "Planning and Building Post-War Scotland," and he analyses the chief reconstruction problems that will particularly apply to Scotland.

He discusses these ably and at length, but one passage in his article is so deserving of commendation that it must be quoted:

"If this national plan is to come about, it will involve a long-term building policy lasting perhaps for thirty or forty years. Whatever happens, let us see that our standards are high and that just as our national and area plans are to be done by competent planners, so our new towns and villages, with their housing, factories, bridges, public buildings, railway stations, air-ports, hospitals, shops, and even lamp-posts and railings (if we must have them), must be well designed by competent architects and designers. We have the talent but we do not make use of it, so that it drifts away to benefit other countries, an export we can ill afford, as the man-made face of Scotland amply testifies. If you doubt my word, next time you go to Edinburgh take a walk along Princes Street and look, not at the Castle, but at the shop buildings on the other side. You will see everything from Middle West dignity to tottering pomp and pure Victorian drawing-room—everything in fact (with one exception) but sincere

and dignified design. Then take a run over to Glasgow and see some really dreich new housing schemes; and after that go to the Highlands and see some of the unpleasant little houses that the Department of Agriculture has put up for crofters and smallholders.

"From these one would never guess that there had ever been any good Scottish tradition in architecture. And yet in such places as Edinburgh, Thurso, Inverary, Culross, Stirling, Aberdeen, Kirkcudbright, St. Andrews, and in many parts of the countryside there is ample evidence in all types of building of a modest but forthright Scottish tradition—a tradition that holds a clear message for us, for, though ancient in time, it is modern in spirit. We must progress, certainly, but we should give a developing continuity to our national tradition: the two are not incompatible, as the modern housing in Dumbarton-shire amply proves."

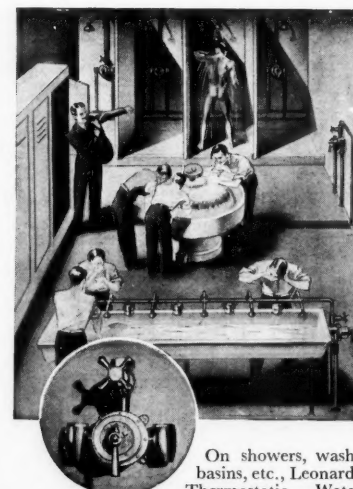
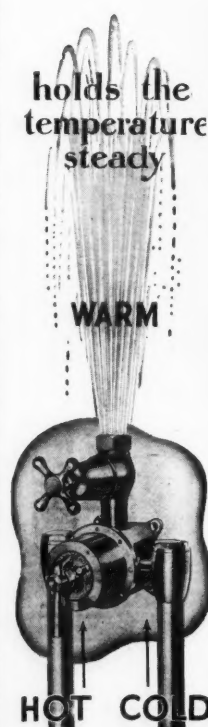
No Bride Cake

The following remarks, contributed to *The News Chronicle* by Stanley Baron under the heading "Age or Beauty," hit the nail more accurately on the head than is usual in the popular press. These sentiments, though not new to the public that knows about architecture, are worth quoting as having been, for once, so succinctly presented to the public that does not.

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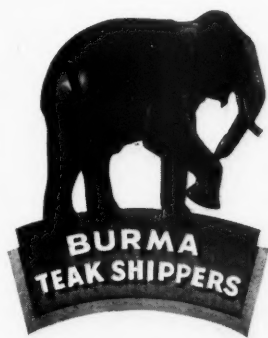
Teak is officially recognised as an essential war-time import. Ample supplies are available and the price remains moderate.

Teak—*Tectona grandis*

The only True Teak is *Tectona grandis*. (See the recently issued "British Standard Nomenclature of Hardwoods" on this point.) Beware of other so-called "teaks." These woods are not *TECTONA GRANDIS* and therefore are *not* Teak. They do not possess the properties of Teak.

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a committee of the Royal Academy to assist?

"Why not, indeed, why not?"

"I have in front of me a list, which has been curiously difficult to procure. It consists of names of members of a Planning Committee, which for a week or two has been working under the chairmanship of Sir Edwin Lutyens.

"It is an impressive list both in length and substance. Names on it are those, among others, of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (mentioned in connection with the possible reconstruction of the Guildhall), Sir Reginald Blomfield, Mr. Edward Maufe, Sir Herbert Baker, Sir Edwin Cooper, Mr. Maynard Keynes, Lord Esher and Professor Richardson.

"Sir Charles Bressey is vice-chairman. Fellow-members of the profession on Sir Edwin's committee are mainly architects who have built up considerable practices and become rich men with designs for town halls, crematoria, banks, and similar monumentry.

"Some of them you can recognize by their columns. Serried ranks of imposing pillars of the kind that Hitler, that great architectural patron, has bestowed on Berlin are their hallmark and delight.

"Their ages range up to seventy-eight. Professor Richardson is an expert on perambulators of all the ages. They are dear, delightful fellows, and many have done great work. Almost any of them could build you a modern building, of lithe steel and concrete, and hide it under a bushel of classical forms and

Roman what-have-you with all the competency in the world.

"But what world? Our world or whose? Modern architecture, employing methods of construction of which Wren and the great masters never dreamed, can either be treated as a modern vital thing, as much entitled to

its own beauty as an aeroplane is to its own lines, or it can be dressed up like a sugar-iced bride-cake.

"I don't like the idea of the Royal Academy bride-cake London, which I fear would be likely to emerge from the work of this well-intentioned committee, if anyone in authority should take it too seriously."

The Buildings Illustrated

House at Harrow Weald.

Architect: Frederick MacManus.

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